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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

TEACHING WRITING AND COMPOSITION: FROM THE LARGER FRAMEWORK TO ITS COMPONENT PARTS

by

THEODORE ROBERT COXFORD

(C)

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall, 1992

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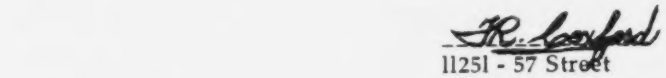

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September 18, 1992

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Teaching Writing and Composition: From the Larger Framework To Its Component Parts by Theodore Robert Coxford
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Committee: Dr. W. Wilde

September, 1992

This study is dedicated:

To my parents, Robert and Margaret Coxford with heartfelt thanks for the joy and life they share with me.

To my sister, Robin Lynne Alary for her faith in me.

To Anna Gertrude Ingham and J. Bertin Webster who began it all.

To the many children it has been my privilege to learn from and the many more still to come.

Abstract

While there has been much interest in writing research in the last few years, very few studies have focused upon the teachers' beliefs and philosophy in implementing a method of writing into their classroom.

There are also several different approaches to teaching written communication, one of these is the 'Blended Structure and Style Programme'. This particular programme has received little formal investigation.

This study was designed to investigate a teachers' beliefs and philosophy in implementing the 'Blended Structure and Style Programme' of writing. The design of the study followed an action research perspective. Action research as the name suggests, is directly concerned with developing a closer relationship between theory and practice. Specifically, the researcher collaborated with a Grade Four teacher who was implementing 'The Blended Structure and Style Programme' developed by Dr. J. B. Webster. Through collaboration, the researcher describes the teacher's beliefs and philosophy in implementing the Blended Structure and Style Programme in her classroom. The study describes the writing method and the integration of reading into it, the design and implementation of the research and an analysis of the teacher and her classroom organization.

The data collected in the study consisted of field-notes, audio-recordings of interviews with the teacher, a teacher journal, and a written description of the classroom's writing context. The overall findings suggest the teachers' beliefs, philosophy and conceptions of the writing process determined the specific goals and the overall plan influenced the achievement of the goals. Students were provided with many opportunities to write and the physical surroundings supported the writing activities which occurred. The overall role taken by the teacher was that of a guide or facilitator who created the opportunities and the learning environment for the children in her classroom.

The analysis of the data enabled the researcher to identify the teachers' language learning programme and the philosophy and beliefs underlying the implementation of the Blended Structure and Style Programme. From this analysis six themes emerged: 1. The Teachers' Philosophy; 2. Incentives;

3. Demonstrating Student Learning and Development; 4. Ownership; 5. Process/Product or Both; and 6. Reading and Writing.

Among the conclusions of this study are that the teachers' beliefs and philosophy played a strong role in programme implementation. The teachers' informed view of the writing process actively affected how writing was taught in the classroom. Within the context of the instructional writing programme, success experiences per se, and success in learning to write were dependent, in part, on the teacher using instructional methods and materials which approximated the instructional ranges of the students to whom she was responsible. Employing cross-subject writing experiences provided students more individual writing time. The importance of teacher modelling writing appeared to be vital to the development of positive attitudes about writing. This indication from the model which the teacher exhibited was taken to mean that this particular teacher was indeed a reflective practitioner in regards to the process of writing. Possible implications for language learning education and suggestions for further research have been provided.

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is extended to a number of individuals:

To **Dr. Graham Fishburne** who guided my graduate programme and served as thesis advisor. Thank you for the 'food for thought' (quiche)!, patience. support and encouragement.

To **Dr. B. Schwartz** who served on my thesis committee. Your constructive and editorial critiques were most valuable.

To **Dr. W. Wilde** who served on my thesis committee. Your assistance, critiques and guidance were most appreciated along with your stated trust and faith in myself.

To **Dr. Ken Ward** who served on my thesis committee. Your renewed friendship and guidance is treasured.

To **my parents** for their encouragement and support throughout my graduate programme.

To **my friends outside the University of Alberta** who by their kindness and support, helped me through the entire programme; especially Dr. Bertin Webster.

To **my fellow graduate students** who allowed me to discuss ideas with them and were unflaggingly patient and kind. The time spent in discussing plans, ideas and papers did much to help shape my thinking. The good times spent with these friends will now be sorely missed.

To **a certain teacher and students of a Northern Alberta School District** who were most helpful and co-operative in discussing ideas and trying various suggestions in their writing.

To the **Edmonton Public School System** for an opportunity to return to study.

To **my Associate Superintendent George Traynor** for his constant help, support, encouragement and living faith.

To **Miss Marylin Elliott** for her continual assistance in locating library materials from the collection and the on-line searches.

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Chapter I

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

> People want to write. The desire to express is relentless. People want others to know what they hold to be truthful. They need the sense of authority that goes with authorship. They need to detach themselves from experience and examine it by writing. ... When we do write, we often write badly. The press continually reminds us that students can no longer punctuate, use proper grammar, spell correctly, or write legibly. But the crisis in writing goes well beyond these visible signs. People do not see themselves as writers because they believe they have nothing to say that is of value or interest to others. They feel incompetent at conveying information through writing. ... In the classroom learners are viewed as receivers, not senders. A far greater premium is placed on students' ability to read and listen than on their ability to speak and write. In fact, writing is seldom encouraged. Yet when students cannot write, they are robbed not only of a valuable tool for expression but of an important means of developing thinking and reading power as well.
> ..There is hope, however. Barriers to good writing are not as high or insurmountable as they seem. Students who write poorly can improve quickly with skilled, personal attention that concentrates on what they know and can tell others. Good teaching does produce good writing. (Graves, D.., 1978, p, 4)

Graves addresses two central questions: Is it important to write? And, if so, why don't we write? These two questions are considered to be of paramount importance considering that such a barrage of criticism has been directed at educators from the community at large. "Something is not happening in the schools. Some teachers are not encouraging students to write" according to Richard Hoffpauir, associate-chair of the Department of English at the University of Alberta (Ferguson, 1991). Similarly McDaniel (1984) states: "For a century now, universities have complained about the quality of their students' writing. When the media joined the hue and cry, every learning institution in the land seemed to address the matter.

However, after endless debate and thought, no one has yet stated clearly what the problem is, and certainly no one has found a permanent cure" (p.56).

IS IT IMPORTANT TO WRITE?

The echo of "I don't get this. It doesn't make sense!" can be recalled by many teachers. This grappling with making sense is significant. "Writing is most important not as etiquette, not even as a tool, but as a contribution to the development of a person, no matter what that person's background and talents" (Graves, 1978, p.6). Writing contributes to intelligence. James Britton (1971, p. 23) states that "language is our principal means of classifying and it is this classifying function that goes the farthest towards accounting for language as an organizer of our representations of our experiences." The work of psycholinguists and cognitive psychologists shows that writing is a highly complex act that demands the analysis and synthesis of many levels of thinking. Vygotsky (1982) also believed that language is an expression of our thinking and a vehicle for making meaning out of our thoughts. In addition, writing develops initiative. "In reading, everything is provided; the print waits on the page for the learner's action. In writing, the learner must supply everything; the right relationship between sounds and letters, the order of the letters and their form on the page, the topic of the writing, information, questions, answers and order"(Graves, 1978, p. 6). "Writing develops courage. Writers leave the shelter of anonymity and offer to public scrutiny their interior language, feelings and thoughts. There lie both the appeal and the threat of writing" (Graves. 1978, p. 7). Fillion (1983, p. 702) states: "language is the exposed edge of learning. Any writer can be deeply hurt. At no point is the learner more vulnerable than in writing." On the other hand, writing, more than any other subject, can be the means to personal breakthrough in learning, (Durrell, 1978, p. 29, as cited in Graves, 1978).

Durrell, a pioneer in the reading field and an authority for fifty years, strongly advocates the use of writing as a help to reading. "Writing is active; it involves the child; and doing is important,"(p.7). Durrell goes on to say, "Teachers make learning too passive. We have known for years the child's first urge is to write and not read and we haven't taken advantage of this fact. We have underestimated the power of the output languages like speaking and writing,"(p.7). As children grow older, writing contributes strongly to reading comprehension. Students who do not write beyond the primary years lose an important tool for reading more difficult materials. (Coombs, 1975; and Stotsky, 1975). Researchers such as Coombs and Stotsky have tied reading comprehension to the ability of students to combine sentences in writing. The ability to revise writing for greater power and economy is one of the higher forms of reading. Writing is important, struggling, striving to make sense.

WHY DON'T WE WRITE?

In 1978 Graves maintained that the teaching of writing suffers, in North America, because reading dominates elementary education in schools. Nowhere else in the world does reading maintain such a hold on early learning (Graves, 1978). Although reading is valued, in other countries, it is viewed more in the perspective of total communication. Although in the last few years it would appear that there are signs of improvement, our anxiety about reading has been a national neurosis. Concern about reading is today such a political, economic and social force in North American education that an imbalance in forms of communication is guaranteed from the start of a child's schooling. The momentum of this force is such that a public re-examination of early education is urgently needed. Neglect of a

child's expression in writing limits the understanding the child gains from reading (Britton, 1975).

In the late '70's research on writing was decades behind that on reading. Donald Graves reports that in the twenty-five year period prior to 1977, "Only 156 studies in writing in the elementary grades ... (had) ... been done in the United States" (1984, p. 92). Research on all aspects of writing has produced only about as many studies as has research on the topic of reading readiness alone. A National Institute of Educational analysis of research in basic skills does not even include writing in that category, mentioning only "reading and mathematical skills" as being required "for adequate functioning in society" (National Institute of Education, 1976). Of research articles published in 1969, five per-cent were on reading; articles on writing were included in a category labeled "other," which constituted less than one per-cent (Persell, Columbia University, 1971). During this period not only was there a developing awareness of the need for research into writing, but, of equal importance, there has been a growing consensus that the traditional research paradigm has failed to provide insights necessary for educators to comprehend how children learn to write. Thus, the very face of the writing research itself has changed from experimental designs which concentrated on manipulating the writing environment in order to produce "better writing," to longitudinal studies in which the researchers have observed what writers actually do during the composing process (Clay, 1975; Graves, 1973; Harste & Woodward, 1980; Murray, 1984; Dyson, 1978; Juliebo & Edwards, 1989).

Even a casual survey of many elementary-school workbooks shows that pupils are customarily required to circle, underline, or draw a line to identify correct answers. Rarely are they asked to respond in full sentences. In secondary schools and universities, students are asked orally more and

more to fill in squares with pencils for computer analysis. Examination essays are disappearing. In her review of writing research Marcia Whiteman (1980, p. 150) notes that "... what writing instruction there is ... (in schools) ... generally consists of workbook exercises and drills in what are thought to be 'before writing skills." Using the photo-copier to replace workbooks is not the answer. We now 'sheet' children to death. Whatever happened to the writing tablet? Thus, although writing is frequently extolled, worried over, and cited as a public priority, it is something which needs greater attention in schools.

Writing models thus do not exist for most children, in school or out. Robert Conners (1978,) in his examination of teachers' "thought processes, beliefs and principles during instruction" came to the conclusion that:

> **The dimension of teacher behavior that deals with how teachers think, that is plan, make decisions and judgements, and the underlying beliefs and principles that influence these processes, has been a relatively neglected research tradition. (p. 2)**

John Proctor agreeing with Conners states, in his M.Ed. thesis of 1986, "Underlying Conners' assumption that the curriculum which the teacher develops is based to a large extent on the ideological stance which the teacher holds". Research which has investigated teachers' beliefs has come to the conclusion that the beliefs which teachers have not only influence their teaching practices, but, of more importance, have a significant effect on the learning which takes place in the classroom (Harste and Woodward, 1980; Spanjer, 1982). This being the case, Harootunian suggests that " ... researchers' attentions should turn to the subjectively reasonable beliefs that teachers hold (1980, p. 267). This position is supported by Nespor (1984) who conducted a major review of the studies into the beliefs which teachers hold about a wide

variety of teaching contexts and variables from curriculum to community influences. An important conclusion of this review was that:

> **... theories of teaching, products of experience and accommodation to the practical problems of the classroom act as strong inertial forces which must be well understood if programs of reform and change in teaching practice are to be effectively implemented (p.3).**

Children may see adults read and certainly hear them speak, but rarely do they see adults write (Graves, 1978, p. 16). And it is even less likely that they will actually observe how an adult composes. We know of the importance of models in reading and speaking. David Hawkins (1974) argues that "the greatest art in teaching is the art of combination" (p. 10). Hawkins included in this the combination of high teacher input and high student input.

> **Some teachers, in their enthusiasm for process and for student input in the curriculum, seem to reject formal instruction entirely. Yet when students are deeply absorbed in their subject matter, formal instruction can lead them to probe, test, and learn" (p. 11).**

Although there is a shortage of research data on how adult models affect children's writing, clear inferences can be drawn as warnings about the future of writing. Children begin to lose their natural urge to put their messages down in writing as soon as they begin to have a sense of audience, at eight or nine years of age. It is at this point that adults begin to have a strong influence as models. It is also the time when teachers' comments on children's papers begin to have an impact. This impact affects children for the rest of their lives. Maybury (1967) writes: "Intensive writing, is concerned with encouraging children to use fully what they have within themselves: ideas, impressions, feelings, fears, hopes, their imagination and such language as they can command. It is an attempt to get at the nine-tenths of the iceberg of a child's mind that he does not often use in the kind of formal

work suggested by the name 'composition'" (p. 10) and "No human skill or art can be mastered unless it is constantly practised"(p. 19).

Disturbing thoughts dominate the memories of people from all walks of life as they recount learning experiences in writing. These are typical memories of people who were interviewed in the preparation of this study. "There was something dark or sinister about it." "Be neat and tidy or you flunk." Memories not very positive. For most people their comments showed fear and the way in which they were taught has determined their view of writing and the degree to which they practice it. These disturbing thoughts were of great concern to the researcher.

Punishments in the form of compositions and mechanical writing exercises are still not uncommon in the classroom. School discipline, grammar, and spelling are often mentioned together as a single package containing what is most needed in education today. "Parents often reflect the view that the mechanics of writing are more important than the content. Teachers' impressions of what constitutes effective teaching of writing are similar to those of the general public" (Graves, 1978, p. 17). It would appear that neither the teachers of college courses nor their advanced professional training have aided them in teaching writing in any other way. They therefore teach as they were taught. And so the links in the chain are forged. In a study in 1973 Donald Graves asked seven-year old children, "What do you think a good writer needs to do in order to write well?" Children who had a difficult time with writing responded, "To be neat, space letters, spell good, and know words." Children who were more advanced in writing added, "Have a good title and a good ending." Children were also asked, "How does your teacher decide which papers are the good ones?" The following criteria were commonly cited by children of all ability levels. "It

has to be long, not be messy, and have no mistakes." In both cases, the children's impressions of what good writing demanded were connected with their teacher's corrections on their papers. And clearly, teachers did not tend to call attention to the content of the papers. Not once did children speak of good writing as providing information of interest to others.

We persist in seeing writing as a method of moral development, not as an essential mode of communication. The eradication of error is more important than the encouragement of expression. Clearly, underlying this attitude toward the teaching of writing is the belief that most people, and particularly students, have nothing of their own to say, therefore, why should they write?

Current research in writing has focused on the writing process itself (Flower & Hayes, 1981), on students' knowledge about the writing process (Raphael, Anderson, & Englert, 1985), and on instruction in writing (Applebee & Langer, 1984). However, little research has been conducted that describes relationships between and differences in teachers' underlying assumptions and conceptions about the writing process.

Statement of the Problem

The problem which this study attempted to explore was to discover and describe one teachers' personal beliefs and teaching philosophy when implementing the method of written communication known as the Blended Structure and Style Programme of Written Communication (BSS) as developed by Dr. J. B. Webster (1988). To discover the teacher's thoughts about Blended Structure and Style as it is implemented in a Literature-Based language learning programme in an actual classroom was the focus of this study. The strengths of the BSS approach are noted later in this chapter. However, very little formal research has been undertaken to study this

approach. If the BSS approach is to gain prominence as an acceptable programme of language learning, then a body of research knowledge will need to be gathered about this particular approach. In order to gain a greater understanding of the 'lived experience' of a teacher implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme this study was undertaken.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate one teacher's beliefs and understandings when implementing Ingham and Webster's Blended Structure and Style programme of language learning. Specifically, the study was designed to discover what the philosophy and beliefs were of a teacher who chose to follow the Blended Structure and Style programme when implementing this programme in a Literature-Based programme approach to the teaching of written communication. The Literature-Based methods of Ingham and Webster are based on sound principles however, as stated above, very little formal research has been carried out. The findings emanating from this study will add to the research base on the effectiveness of Webster's BSS programme of language learning. A solid research base will be necessary to establish the effectiveness of the BSS programme as a viable and effective way of teaching written communication.

Studies, such as those conducted by Graves, have been concerned with methodology as it relates to the teaching of writing and have tended to focus on: Firstly, characteristics which influence the process of learning to write; that is, does one learn to write as one develops walking (through maturation) or is it more like the process of learning to swim or play the piano? In other words there is an obvious relationship between maturation and motor learning and between both of them verbal learning. Secondly, the methods - free styled or structured - and materials - teacher made or purchased - used in

classrooms. Finally, the language achievement of classes in research projects as compared to those in regular grades. Few studies have investigated the relationship of a teacher's beliefs about writing within the context of the instructional writing programme. That such behaviour warrants investigation is evidenced by the statements of authorities in the late 1960's such as Artley (1969, 239-248) and Harris (1969, 195-204), who urged that teachers become the focus of research in language methodology. And the same sentiments are still being presented by such authorities as Blakey, J, et al., 1987; Bussis, A. et al., 1976; Tabachnick, R. & Zeichner, K., 1986 who have shown that the beliefs and/or philosophy that a teacher holds have profound implications on what their lived curriculum within the classroom will be. During the present decade, concern has been expressed as to the efficacy of language writing programmes being used in classrooms. The purpose of the following study was to provide research evidence to add to the paucity of knowledge associated with teacher's beliefs and their lived curriculum.

Research Questions

The following research questions were identified:

1. **Does the teacher see the connection of reading tied into a good writing programme?**

2. **Does the teacher feel that the method of Blended Structure and Style is an effective Literature-Based programme which can be implemented in the language learning programme of the elementary school?**

3. **Does the teacher indulge in critical reflection and, if so, does critical reflection affect subsequent instruction?**

Design Considerations

While Design and Implementation of the Study is fully discussed in Chapter V the researcher here presents the design considerations or issues which led to the above stated problem.

The investigation was designed as a descriptive action research project rather than experimental, and was concerned with teacher perceptions and beliefs associated with students' writing. While the study was designed as action research it used many of the tools of ethnography (eg., Spradley, 1980). Teaching children how to write is of educational significance on two counts. Firstly, it constitutes for the student, a success experience per se, and secondly, represents a major factor contributing to success within the language arts instructional programme. The task of using successful methods is one which confronts the teacher and necessarily involves on his/her part, an estimate of the correct method for each student in his/her class. Inaccurate estimates, leading to the using of inappropriate methods tend to create a learning situation which adversely affects the realization of goals and objectives where instruction and education are concerned. Appropriate methods on the part of the teacher are, therefore, of paramount importance. This thesis therefore focused upon the problems and procedures of teaching writing within a Literature-Based environment. It specifically focused upon the programme of Blended Structure and Style as proposed by Webster (1988) in writing. As the educational system has turned to emphasize writing across the curriculum, the need has arisen for increased awareness, knowledge and application of writing skills, strategies and programme through which they may be applied in the classroom.

The selected classroom was particular in that it had to be upper elementary and the language arts programme Literature-Based since most of the work in BSS has been in the primary grades. The teacher had to be one

who had freely, by their own choice, selected to implement the Blended Structure and Style programme. The researcher also wanted a teacher who would feel free to select and take risks in implementing the programme based on the perceived needs of the class. The teacher of the classroom also had to be willing to commit his/her time and energy into articulating his/her own philosophy and beliefs for the benefit of this research. Fictitious names were used to guarantee anonymity.

To gain the "synthesis" proposed by Wilson (1977) this study enacted Pohland's notion of the "multi-method, multi-person, multi-situation, multi-variable" nature of participation observation (as cited in Wilson (1977). This was done by utilizing the traditional methods of participant observation such as direct observation, structured and/or unstructured interviews and the collection of personal documents. Also by having other researchers read the transcripts, at arms length, to check for interpretations the researcher was using another multi-dimension. By using multi-dimensional methods the researcher aimed to establish a convergence of data which would define the teacher's reality. The design was aimed at reconstructing the life-world of the teacher through the convergence of the internal, or personal framework, with other sources of knowledge of the same phenomena which were external to the teacher being observed. This "arms length" process led to a great deal of further independent reading, analysis and discussion with professors, colleagues and graduate researchers. Once this knowledge was gained, it was then sorted into self-defined "elicitation frames" to represent the "reality" of what was observed in order to discover the teacher's life-world in the particular classroom selected for the study.

There are several ways in which bias, including ethnocentrism was consciously minimized. First, the avoidance, by the researcher, of developing

preconceived problems and the subsequent development of informant categories eliminated any imposed ethnocentric structure. Second, the researcher attempted to be conscious of the semantics involved in the recording and classification of data where personal biases might appear by consulting and seeking feedback from other professors and researchers. Hence, objectivity entailed an ability to state the characteristics of objects and events and not evaluate, interpret or prejudge them without identifying such subjectivity. Thirdly, the researcher attempted to enact an exhaustive data treatment where interactions were presented, as far as possible, within the context of the dialogue from which they were drawn. Mehan (1978, 32-64) insists that an exhaustive data treatment is a necessary check against a researcher selecting and recording only that evidence which supports an associated hypothesis. Such selective support of the researcher's claim had a self-validating quality, and used as many sources of data collection as possible. Multiple perspectives of data collection lessen the tendency to personally bias data (Pohland as cited in Wilson, 1977).

> **by systematically seeking to understand actions from the different perspectives of various groups of participants, the researcher avoids getting caught in any one outlook. He is able to view behaviour simultaneously from all perspectives. These tensions of point of view - between outsider and insider and between groups of insiders - keep the careful researcher from lapsing into subjectivity. (p. 259)**

Trustworthiness was a major consideration in this study since the researcher was only observing one teacher. Guba (1981) suggests that a naturalistic study must address four concerns in order to establish its trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These four concerns are elaborated upon in Chapter V - Design and Implementation of the Study.

Principles Of A Literature Based Environment - The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning.

The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning is an individualized method which blends the best features of various approaches into a single, comprehensive, integrated system to meet the needs of children with varying tastes, interests, speeds and abilities; a method in which children happily participate in reading-writing skill learning centre activities. This literature-based method was developed by Mrs. A. G. Ingham (1972) of Yorkton, Saskatchewan while her assistant Dr. J. B. Webster developed the Blended Structure and Style programme of writing. The Blended Sound-Sight method goes into a great deal of detail on how to set up, how to manage and how to motivate. This 'how to' aspect of her method which details helping all students read and write independently, according to each child's rate of speed and ability, while maintaining structured freedom in a well rounded programme is, in this researchers opinion, an excellent example of a Literature Based programme. It is the contention of this researcher that good teachers are eclectic within a philosophy. When students read, they engage in a transaction or interaction with the text. According to Louise Rosenblatt (1983), a piece of literature is only alphabetic symbols printed on a page until a reader transforms them into meaning, and "the literary work exists in the live circuit set up between reader and text"(p. 25). Rosenblatt describes the reader's role as that of an active co-creater rather than a re-creator because "every time a reader experiences a piece of literature, it is in a sense created anew" (p. 113). This response to literature, involves a negotiation of meaning between reader and text. Good teachers use children's ideas. Good teachers

provide a Literature-Based environment. Literature in this context of "meaningful print" is using a Literature- Based environment.

From careful observation and the results of thirty years classroom experience, this researcher agrees with Rosenblatt's view that any given pupil should have the benefit of exposure to a wide range of literature, not just the stories which happen to appear in given basal-level reading books. If not used properly, even sparingly, basals are often boring. This does not mean that Blended Sound-Sight would do away with basal readers. Basal readers have been abused because ability to read the text was considered the final goal. In the Blended Sound-Sight approach the reader has a minor place but one which is vital. Centering instruction on using 'real' books rather than basal reading schemes is using a Literature-Based curriculum. While many teachers believe that reading can and should be its own reward, the key to a successful reading programme is in providing for a wide range of enriching, satisfying books and helping children to find their own rewards in them. The provisions for worthwhile reading materials and time to read and talk about them are all very essential. In such a setting, the pupils are able to compare their individual reactions to books and understanding from books are shared. They learn what it is to be a lifelong reader. Recently an American national commission regarding reading instruction made several recommendations relating to the importance of a Literature-Based curriculum. The following are some of the key conclusions of the study (Commission, 1984):

> **Children should spend more time in independent reading by reading a minimum of two hours per week at the third and fourth grade level. The books should include classics and modern works of fiction and non-fiction. (p. 119)**

The developers of the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning argued twenty years before the commission that library reading from mid-grade one onward should be time-tabled for one half hour per day or two and a half

hours each week. This is specifically designated as the library sharing period, since children read to each other in partners and it has nothing to do with the basal reader. The commission continues:

> **Schools should maintain well-stocked and managed libraries in order to assure a constant access for children to read a large number of interesting and informative books. A professional librarian is also important for encouraging young readers to read widely in books which match the interest and ability levels of the learners. (p. 119)**

The problem here is that a professional librarian and a central library do not create a Literature-Based environment. Children need access and exposure to the library. Blended Sound-Sight maintains that a classroom library should be located in each classroom which is in addition to the schools central library. The Blended Sound-Sight method clearly shows how this can be achieved where "the library is the heart" (Ingham, 1972, p. 114) of the environment.

In building a viable Literature-Based reading programme for elementary children, Blended Sound-Sight suggests a number of important principles and concepts that should be kept in mind. Applying these ideas during the construction and implementation stages of the reading curriculum will help to ensure the success of learners as they reach out to the goal of being informed and interested in all phases of reading. Special reading programmes which stress critical thinking and other skills should be implemented as appropriate. Ingham (1972) suggests in the Blended Sound-Sight method that a large number of books at many interest and subject levels should be purchased. She also points out when purchasing books such aspects as the following should be remembered: interest of the learners, their age groups and the readability level of the volumes as determined by a reputable formula such as those suggested by Fry, Smog, Flesch, and Dale-

Chall. In the early primary years, narrative stories predominate in the library. As one moves into grades three and four, more material on content subjects need to be included. Ingham (1972) believes that the teacher should see that children balance their reading between narrative and content. Sometimes extra incentives must be provided to wean even good readers away from an exclusive diet of narrative stories.

Reading for pleasure has become associated exclusively with narrative stories and novels. Reading for content does not mean reading directed towards topics from the content subjects for that specific grade. Ingham suggests in the Blended Sound-Sight method that teachers should be watchful to ensure that each student is nudged into different fields - read some history, some science, some geography and travel. Blended Sound-Sight points out that frequently in their concern to motivate the bottom of the class beyond simple narratives, the teacher forgets the good readers who consequently stay with the same kind of book throughout the year. One child may become a novel fanatic or a space hound. Both should be urged to read about Alexander the Great or the great whales. Also, a learning environment must be established which will help to ensure meaningful conversation, build new reading interests, and lessen individual comparison with other pupils. Elementary teachers are encouraged to learn as much as possible about their students' interests and attitudes through the use of verbal and written interest inventories. These data can be used for such decisions as grouping learners, arranging classroom furniture, and purchasing appropriate reading books. Preparing the total structure for the programme should be done so that it allows for the maximum amount of effort possible for a given learner to spend time reading, enjoying the physical surroundings and possessing a feeling of genuine happiness with the total experience. Hence the reading

environment including variety of books, conversation and critical thinking all contribute to the foundation of a Literature-Based programme.

In the Blended Sound-Sight method a generous amount of time should be provided for the pupils to read. Unfortunately, the total "reading time" allocated in a traditional basal approach classroom is designed primarily to teach a vast array of fragmented reading skills (with accompanying workbook assignments) and little, if any, time is given to recreational reading which correlates with the learner's interest and abilities. Providing periods of uninterrupted sustained reading for as much as thirty minutes a day as suggested through the Blended Sound-Sight method, may be the springboard to asking learners certain questions regarding reactions to such matters as the most exciting part of the selection and the nature of the plot or structure of the story. Providing stimulation and motivation in the classroom is a must for any teacher. Ingham (1972) shows clearly how to use a library 'stairs' as a motivational device to show each child their progress in reading and to encourage extensive reading in the primary grades.

Ingham maintains that the upper elementary grades need a similar device based on the same principles and managed in the same manner as the library 'stairs' of the Blended Sound-Sight. Commercial promotions such as the McDonald's Corporation or Pizza Hut Corporation may readily be blended into such devices. Providing stimulation in the classroom is even more important where schools do not have these marketed services available or where school boards frown on their use. However, a here and now reward will help those who have not yet reached the stage of reading for its own sake. It must be remembered that stimulation is not always the same as motivational devices. (Ingham, 1972, 117).

Ingham (1972) refers to the library sharing period as a time when pupils can talk to each other about their reading experiences and favorite books. For this reason Ingham (1972) refers to this use of the library as a 'sharing' period. Sharing this way might occur in small groups or large groups when individual children tell the entire class about the stories and selections they are currently reading. In a few instances, many successful teachers in a literature-based setting encourage pupils to show original illustrations which they have made regarding different scenes in the story. Acting out parts of the story, such as the part of important story characters and portraying exciting, humorous, and scary scenes form other alternatives. Perhaps several children have read the same selection and wish to form a panel discussion to compare feelings and opinions regarding certain elements of a book or story. They could speculate about such matters; for example, how the characters were honest, fair, and genuine. Ample time, speculation and art as a consequence enhance the foundation upon which a successful programme might be built.

Finally there is an important place in Literature-Based environments for the assessing and monitoring of the reading skill component levels of the individual elementary pupils. All teachers regardless of instructional orientation, need to be concerned about the degree of overall reading skill competency obtained by each student. Thoroughly planning a system of observation could yield valuable data regarding such matters as pupil attitudes, comprehension skill level abilities, and word attack proficiency. Quietly providing individual reading conferences could be invaluable for checking reading skill progress since they provide a scenario whereby the teacher can ask questions dealing with such aspects as literal, interpretive, critical, and creative comprehension. Since the entire class is reading in pairs

during one half hour each day, the teacher may partner with various students to make these assessments.

Possibly using commercial individual reading tests such as the Gray Oral Reading Test will assist in evaluating basic word attack skills. Blended Sound-Sight promotes that certain aspects of reading ability are best judged personally on a one-to-one basis. There are other aspects of reading ability best done through other testing methods. In all cases the assessment procedures should be as "low-key" and non-threatening as possible. If the activity is not conducted properly, interest in reading can be severely damaged. Providing a secure environment where the discussion and sharing of books is always perceived as being a pleasurable experience should be the goal of the elementary teacher. Assessment in all its forms can be and must be arranged to motivate and give pleasure.

The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning reading programme feeds into writing (Ingham, 1972, p. 135). Here, it is suggested by both Ingham (1972) and Webster (1988) to engage pupils in process writing during which time the pupils write creative stories utilizing a basic core of words which have been written on the board by the teacher and students. What writing occurs will depend upon purpose and where the teacher has reached in that programme; writing abbreviated summaries of the story read, the skill of boiling down many pages of reading into a two paragraph summary, writing critiques, totally creating a story of their own using the plot outline of the story just read or producing miniature essays on books related to content subjects rather than to narrative stories. It is possible to produce a good reader who cannot write. The education system produces thousands each year. It is not possible to have a good writer who cannot read. Average children - no more than human beings in general - are not bubbling with creative genius

merely waiting to be liberated by a teacher. Ingham shows through the Blended Sound-Sight method how the good literature of a child's environment feeds into and enriches their writing. In Blended Sound-Sight children are often writing about what they have read. The linkage is clear and direct. Frequently the child is writing about the story they have just read and being encouraged to inject into it their feelings about it or they are creating a new story following the pattern or structure of a story recently read. Even those recognized as geniuses have produced works in which only a minority part is creative, the rest representing mastery of what had gone before. Had they not mastered the known, they would not have been able to create. Had they not mastered the conventions, they would not have been able to bring their creativity to the attention of the world. Children's own thoughts and ideas will be expanded, developed and liberated by their reading.

An analysis of the total structure of the Blended Sound-Sight method which has been planned to be effective and innovative, reveals several salient conclusions. Ingham maintains that pupils by and large, make responsible choices when selecting books. The major responsibility of the teacher is to supply a wide range of books for learners with minimum restriction as to the kinds of books chosen. It is not the role of the teacher to act as a complete censor for all reading. Being surrounded by enticing, exciting books forms a strong attraction for even the most reluctant reader. The vision of seeing practically all of their friends reading and enjoying the experience becomes a strong motivator for all present to want to read. Finding out the preferences of reluctant readers and supplying them with appropriate books involves a reasonable approach to help all children read widely. Reading conferences must be well planned, having interesting and

penetrating questions designed for use with individual pupils. It is generally well agreed that Literature-Based reading programmes must be well designed with sufficient structure to assure that cognitive as well as affective skills are being developed. Careful records should be kept with regard to progress on basic reading skill development as well as the kinds and the nature of books being read.

Teachers should be responsible for reporting progress in reading skills to all parents during parent-teacher conferences. One authority (Hancock & Hill, 1987, 13) notes that at least three important things must be established during the first few weeks of a school term in a Literature-Based classroom. They are (a) a reading corner; (b) a changing class library; and (c) a supportive classroom for reading. Ingham's Blended Sound-Sight method follows this recommendation. However, it should be pointed out that merely providing these facilities do not in themselves guarantee they will be used. Their use must be organized such that every child employs them every school day.

This analysis in summary claims that the Blended Sound-Sight method which is Literature-Based allows pupils an opportunity to read widely in many different subject areas with an accompanying, ever-growing level of overall skill development. Reading should be thought of as an interesting, motivating activity which is student-centered instead of subject-centered. Consequently the world of books comes alive for all elementary children regardless of their age, learning levels or interest.

The following study was conducted to investigate one teacher's beliefs and understandings when implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme of teaching writing within a literature-based environment. It specifically describes the more eclectic method of Blended Sound-Sight as proposed by A. G. Ingham (1972) and her assistant Dr. J. B. Webster (1988) in

writing methodology while describing their implementation which one teacher selected to follow in her classroom. As the educational system has turned to emphasize writing across the curriculum, the need has arisen for increased awareness, knowledge and application of writing skills, strategies and a methodology through which they may be applied in the classroom.

Dr. J. B. Webster's Blended Structure and Style programme (1988) supports the Literature-Based Blended Sound-Sight method as developed by A. G. Ingham. While Ingham's method outlines a Literature-Based programme, Webster deals with writing and it is the implementation of Webster's Blended Structure and Style programme by a classroom teacher which is the focus of this study. The study is a descriptive action research project rather than experimental, and follows the teacher rather than the students. It attempted to describe that which existed at the time.

Finally, rather than describe the researchers' background, the reader is directed to Appendix C where a vita of the researcher attempts to provide a clear understanding of the views and life of the researcher during the past thirty plus years.

Chapter II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Since a strong reading programme seems to be a prerequisite to good writing and must operate in tandem to it, this chapter consists of selected information, from the literature, in an attempt to understand the role of literature in the language learning process which were pertinent to the area of writing in order to provide a background for the study. It presents the findings and the opinions and statements of researchers and professional educators.

It consists of four major sections. The first section concerns the classroom atmosphere or environment and its implication for this study. The second discusses aspects of reading instruction as they apply to the classroom writing situation. The third section, professional opinions concerning the criteria for reading level will be presented and their differences and similarities discussed in conjunction with their importance in the Blended Sound-Sight. And the fourth section gives an overview of the pertinent research, in the areas of the writing process, in order to provide a background for the study.

CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE

Rosenblatt (1982) writes "a receptive, non-pressured atmosphere [that] will free the child to adopt the aesthetic stance with pleasant anticipation, without worry about future demands" (p. 275). This importance of the teacher's first act to establish an atmosphere of trust in the classroom is necessary for children's natural responses to literature to take place. Rosenblatt supports Britton (1982) who claims, "A response to a work of literature is after all an interaction between the work and the reader" (p. 34).

Therefore, "what a child writes is of the same order as what a poet or novelist writes and valid for the same reasons" (p. 36). This study shows that the atmosphere must be prepared and cultivated in which children consider themselves writers and authors who look forward to sharing their stories with others. The approach to teaching and learning that is proposed throughout this study goes beyond the physical arrangement of the classroom. It stresses the importance of the human context in learning. It emphasizes an atmosphere where children's feelings and ways of thinking are valued, and where the growth and development of individual personalities are respected.

Authorities in the field of pedagogy generally emphasize the role of the teacher as a diagnostician who evaluates the abilities of his/her students and is consequently concerned with "both the adaptation of instruction and materials to the achievement level of each child" (Kirk, 1962, 121; Brophy & Good, 1987, 315). Adjusting the level of instruction materials has ramifications for the performance of students when viewed in the context of the importance of the classroom environment. The prepared classroom environment is concerned not only with the physical attractiveness and preparation of the classroom, but also with the personality development of the learners and is an extension of theory proposed by Ingham (1972, 6). Basically, Ingham maintained that personality develops as a consequence of the individual's interaction with the environment. This interaction is composed of behavioral sequences which are always directional, and involve either moving toward or away from an identifiable goal. The direction in which the individual moves is determined not only by the nature or importance of goals or reinforcements which must be made near and clear, but also by the person's anticipation or expectancy that these goals will occur.

Working within this framework Ingham has attempted to develop a theory which might account in part for the learning difficulties of children. A history of failed experience has severe consequences for the learning situation. Experiencing frustration, children begin a learning task with a lower generalized expectancy for success. Cromwell (1961, 47), states "personality or behaviour patterns develop in many children, which tend to lower their social and intellectual efficiency a measure below what we would already expect on the basis of their constitutional impairments". The implications of this theory, when applied directly to the question of instructional reading materials, are immediately obvious. The teacher must assign appropriate materials in which children can succeed, thus fostering the development of a generalized expectancy for success. When instructional materials are too difficult, avoidance tendencies are likely to develop and functioning will be depressed. As far back as 1940, Kirk directed specific attention to the problem teachers must overcome when students are received into their classes after they have experienced failure. He notes:

> **...the teacher should first re-establish the child's security which has been shattered during his years of failure She will have do do this by presenting the child with materials with which he can succeed, so that confidence may be re-established. (37-38).**

Although Kirk's emphasis here is focused on the provision of a successful learning environment for children new to the class situation, it cannot be confined to such students. Appropriate materials are essential for all students whether or not their placement is recent. It is particularly crucial at the beginning of a new school year when most teachers face all new students. Donald Graves (1984) states:

> **Every day hundreds of thousands of [children] wrestle, smile, laugh curse, and weep over their writings. Some, pondering new schemes for delightful fantasies, are in a constant state of rehearsal for writing. Others are repelled at the thought of writing because it means five to six redrafts of the spelling of a single word. Miracles of creation are occurring all around us. (p. 17)**

We know that not all classrooms are alike. A classroom is a very complex community. Each classroom reveals a prevailing atmosphere which usually reflects the teacher's personality and beliefs. This researcher believes that one miracle of creation is a prepared classroom environment and this study attempts to examine one teacher's preparation of a favorable classroom environment revealing the teacher as a planner, decision-maker, and facilitator/guide to the learner.

READING TO WRITE

A great many theorists have speculated on the relationship between reading and writing skills. Smith (1968) maintains that reading and writing are clearly related skills which function through visual symbols and states that "it might be hypothesized, therefore, that enhancing proficiency in reading contributes to proficiency in writing" (p. 5).

Readers respond to print differently. Each individual responds to literature in an individual way. It is the reader's individual response which indicates both understandings and the personal significance of the literature. Rosenblatt (1982, 268) suggests that without personal significance the act of reading loses its most fundamental purpose and becomes mechanical. She sees reading as "a transaction, a two-way process, involving a reader and a text at a particular time under particular circumstances" (p. 269). This transaction determines the schemata that the reader calls forth in the transaction with the text. Thus allowing the reader to construct meaning and, through the experience, reacting to the schematic content and meaning that he/she creates

from the experience. The development of reader reactions are a vital part in the process of obtaining meaning from the reading process and, according to Rosenblatt, the educator's first responsibility. The teacher dealing with children, literacy, and literature needs to understand that often the reader's limited language abilities and immature cognitive strategies "in no way contradict the fact that they are living through aesthetic experiences, their attention focused on what, in their transaction with the words, they can see and hear and feel" (p. 272). Reader response is not only the starting point for making meaning with text, it is also the reason why we approach the text in the first place and is what gives significance to the act of reading. Response is both how and why we read.

By way of literature children can be exposed to vicarious experiences which may help them to understand experiences in the real world. James Britton (1971) expresses the viewpoint that literature use as a strong source of fantasy can enable children in a play-making sense to "improvise freely upon events of the actual world and in doing so enable [themselves] to go back and meet the demands of real life more adequately (p. 45). Literature and children interact in the process of becoming literate. Reading, in its holistic sense, is a part of the greater act of literacy. The child can and does use literature as a means of making sense of their world. Literature may become an extension of that world and literary response an initiation and indication of personal significance.

The higher the grade level, the more diverse the individual differences and reading abilities of the students within a classroom. Among grade seven students, for example, reading levels may vary from those who can read at a grade two level to those who read at a university level. Providing appropriate literature especially for assignments becomes more challenging

the higher the grade level. Overwhelmed by the task many higher grade teachers appear to ignore it totally. Since students of such diverse abilities are often taught together, the literature employed for classroom instruction may have to be at the grade level as for example in the hypothetical grade seven. If so the teacher must read, choral read, re-read and spend the amount of time necessary with the reading of the literature in order for all the students to understand it. If this piece of literature is to become the centerpiece for writing then the teacher should discuss it from the point of view of writing techniques, main ideas in paragraphs, topic and clincher sentences, variety in sentence openers, similes and metaphors or any special devices the author has employed. In other words the prose should be treated in a method often reserved exclusively for poetry. [For an excellent example of this method applied to poetry see Ingham, 1972, 147]. The challenge for the teacher is to see that by the end of the lesson the lower twenty per-cent of the class can read the selection, while the top twenty per-cent has not become bored, but reads with an enhanced appreciation of the author's style. However where assignments are given to students to work on their own, the level of reading must stretch from primary to adult. It is rare that one piece of literature could ever be assigned to a grade seven class to work on individually. Assignments should be individualized just as reading is individualized. Therefore it might be argued that the increasing numbers in modern society who fail to understand their social environment, who feel the world is senseless and who as a consequence react violently and apparently senselessly to it are doing so because they fail to read. Meanwhile schools are being seduced into spending more and more time on activities which socialize children rather than promoting life-long readers by which students might socialize

themselves. Friere (1985) makes the following statements about literacy as a tool in understanding reality:

> **The act of reading cannot be explained as merely reading words since every act of reading words implies a previous reading of the world and subsequent rereading of the world. There is a permanent movement back and forth between "reading" reality and reading words... (p. 18).**

In this fast moving age, as indeed in all others, communication between individuals, groups and nations has depended upon the use of language, spoken and written. A very young child soon finds that his/her first spoken words are more satisfying, exciting and effective than gestures, cries, or even smiles, and so through this interaction process by listening, effort, and continual practice he/she learns to talk. Day by day through using his/her power of hearing and speaking, he/she is able to communicate with others. Children bring to any situation previous knowledge of their world. In fact, that knowledge, gathered from life is crucial to bringing meaning to the messages received in spoken, pictoral, or printed language. In her work with beginning readers Clay (1979) identifies lack of experience as a major contributor to difficulties in learning to read:

> **A second reason why children may not have the skills that are necessary for good progress in reading when they enter school is that they have not had adequate experiences in their preschool years. Their homes may not have provided a good range of interesting experiences appropriate to their developmental needs. More specifically, the child who has not had many opportunities to converse with adults will have limited language skills and will have difficulty in reading. The child who has not lived in homes where adults share books with children will have less skill in the perception of two-dimensional space than the average child. (p. 17)**

There may be some who would question the possibility or advisability of beginning written language in grade one, but anyone who has seen a group

of young children writing stories with evident enjoyment and satisfaction has seen the answer with their own eyes. The contrast between this situation and the sometimes laboured productions in higher grades known as 'composition' is very great indeed. It appears that if a child begins to use his/her reading vocabulary in writings of his/her own, at the earliest possible moment a unity is achieved among his/her learnings which brings both spontaneity of expression and skill in mechanics. If however, writing is delayed until there is a wide gap between his/her reading and writing vocabulary, the spontaneity is lost, and written language becomes a difficult task. An article by Hacker (1980, 866) provides a clear overview of schema theory in relation to comprehending written text and discusses implications for education. In his view, schema theory supports a holistic, meaning-based approach to reading and at the same time makes bottom-up, or data-driven, processing more efficient for the reader, especially the beginning reader. The students' familiarity with story schemata and their ability to call up the appropriate schemata are seen as areas that can be enhanced through literature in the language learning curriculum. Comprehension instruction should be as holistic as possible.

Recently it has been suggested that reading and writing specifically are both processes whereby the reader or writer strives to construct meaning (Squire, 1984). This premise has permitted a more definitive analysis of the reading-writing relationship. The work of Mandler & Johnson (1977) have enabled more useful parallels to be drawn between the language user's text processing and the actual text organization. In this way the effects of text variables, content and organization, could be separated from the reader/writer variables such as prior knowledge, recall, comprehension, and structure imposed upon text. Given that reading and writing involve a

constructive process whereby meaning is created through text, along with the systematic means for text analysis and a well defined story schema theory, the reading-writing relationship can be further analyzed through further research but was not considered as a part of this study.

Margaret Meek (1984) did studies in the field of literacy and childrens' literature. Her work with adolescents suggests that aesthetic experiences with literature are a vital aspect of learning to read and write. Meek's work concerning the importance of literature as a means of providing children with a meaningful reading experience as an avenue to literary development focuses on the relationship of the reading experiences of young children and their growth in learning to read and write. Meek and other professionals such as Bettleheim (1976) attest to the basic importance of the literary experience itself for human existence and growth.

The work of Freire, Britton, Rosenblatt, Meek, Bettleheim and others deal with the concepts of literacy and literary transaction. In their works, the reading process is considered from a holistic stance, meaning the act of reading cannot be divorced from its greater whole, that of literacy. Literature and children interact in the process of becoming literate.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL

Instructional level reading is demonstrated by a degree of accuracy in both word recognition and comprehension aspects of reading. Instructional level reading, therefore, implies that reading involves "not only the fluent, accurate recognition of words, but also the fusion of specific meanings represented by them into a chain of related ideas" (Austin & Morrison, 1963, 35). This definition of reading - gross rather than specific - is one accepted by many educators in the field of both reading and writing education. The reference made to "the fusion of specific meanings into a chain of related

ideas" implies comprehension beyond the literal level and this point is imperative to the teaching of written composition. Ingham (1972) in referring to reading activities for children has observed that "reading is, first of all, a language activity. Comprehension, not just the recognition of written words, is the goal and reason for teaching it." She further maintains that "critical, independent thinking is necessary to good reading" and recommends that the stimulation and development of higher thought processes such as the recognition of absurdities, inductive and deductive reasoning, and categorization be an essential part of the readiness activities in order that reading for children does not represent an exercise in word recognition where 'comprehension is incidental'. Robert Smith (1968) agrees with Ingham stating that for children, a "central aim of the reading program is for each child to eventually move from over-attending to the process of attacking words, to focusing on their meaning and content" (p. 159). He further maintains that "reading is essentially a useless exercise if the reader does not understand the meaning of the words he calls" (p. 160). He recommends the use of informal reading inventories and advocates that questions following an informal reading inventory go beyond the literal level. Smith himself contends that teachers' ability to develop comprehension skills in students will eventually allow them to "grasp the meaning and implications of entire selections".

The concept of instruction level was first proposed by Betts (1946). He describes this level as the "highest possible reading level at which systematic instruction can be initiated," (p. 439). Further definitions of instructional level represent a rephrasing or restating of Bett's view. Zintz (1970, 53) identifies it as the teaching level, while Bond and Tinker (1967, 199) note that it is the "level at which a pupil is able to make successful progress in reading

under teacher guidance". In terms of a student's reading performance, Harris (1962, 122) observes that instructional level is indicated by a minimum of word recognition errors, fairly fluent reading, and comprehension which is mainly correct. This researcher favours the definition of Betts (1946).

Such descriptive definitions of instructional level are open to personal interpretations by individuals, but most descriptions are accompanied by specific criteria which denote per-cent accuracy scores for both word recognition and comprehension on the part of a reader. Betts (1946), himself, stipulated that instructional level was the level at which a child, reading from printed materials, made "a minimum comprehension score of at least seventy-five per-cent based on both factual and inferential questions, and accurately pronounced ninety-five per-cent of the running words (p. 499). Various authorities tend to agree with the criteria proposed by Betts. Harris (1962) has stated that "the most important single question to answer about a child's reading is how difficult a book can this child read?" (p. 153). Within the instructional reading programme, the instructional level provides the teacher with reasonably concrete guidelines for answering this question. In providing a child with instructional materials at his instructional level, the teacher, in fact, provides materials which Zintz (1970) claims "... are difficult enough to be challenging but sufficiently easy that the student can do independent seat work" (p. 54). This observation by Zintz draws attention to the benefits which accrue to both student and teacher when appropriate materials are assigned. The student benefits by virtue of the fact that instructional level materials accompanied by effective teaching set the stage for success in learning to read, and the teacher benefits because appropriate materials imply more time available for the supervision of instruction and presentation of skills. For example, let us say the skill being taught is variety

in sentence openers. We have a piece of writing and together class and teacher intend to convert every sentence to a variety of openers. The immediate skill is openers. But before we begin the skill the class should read the paragraph the teacher has chosen. They "play" with the paragraph like some would "play" with a poem before reading it. For illustrative purposes let us suppose that we have chosen a paragraph in which the following sentence occurs:

A conglomerate of businesses combined to fix prices and maintain a monopoly over the fresh vegetable trade.

Ultimately we are going to use this sentence for various openers but first:

1. **"Conglomerate" and "monopoly" must be defined and synonyms for each listed.**

2. **Over the period of teaching the class will read the paragraph including this sentence many times. The teacher reads, the class choral reads. Boys and girls read alternate lines. The class reads, stopping for the verbs which the teacher reads alone or the reverse.**

3. **Note spelling rules in 'business' and 'maintain'.**

4. **Discuss two verbs 'combined' and 'maintain'.**

5. **If they have learned "ly" words, decide on which could be used with the verbs. Let us add to the verbs: regularly, repeatedly, or occasionally combined, tightly, loosely, intentionally maintain.**

6. **After which words could we use 'which' clauses?**
   a) **A conglomerate of business which were centered in Edmonton, combined...**
   b) **A conglomerate of business which held many firms together, fixed...etc.**
   c) **A monopoly which could not be broken...**
   d) **Fresh vegetable trade which was centered in St. Albert...**

The writer is confident that when the lesson is completed with those learners

every child would be able to read that sentence and ninety per-cent would be able to write and spell the words accurately even though the reading level might be grade eight. There are thousands of ways to "play" with a paragraph but the above should give some idea. Similarly there are thousands of ways to "play" with poetry in such a way that old skills are being revisited and the children are learning the reading skills. The argument for a prepared classroom environment and the use of appropriate instructional materials has been advanced but the issue of appropriate materials is crucial.

Having played (as above) so that everyone can read and understand it, we go for the new skill being taught - variety in sentence openers:

1. **As it stands it has a subject opener.**
2. **In the city a conglomerate... prepositional opener.**
3. **Regularly, a conglomerate..."ly" opener.**
4. **Combining to fix prices..."ing" opener.**
5. **When supply exceeded demand,...clausal opener.**
6. **Conglomerates fix prices. They maintain monopolies. Conglomerates dominate trade. 3sss [3:3:3] replacing a vss.***

* [3sss stands for three short staccato sentences of five words or less and in this case three each which replace a vss (very short sentence). The 3sss count as one sentence.]

This becomes the skill being taught in this lesson. However it has been introduced not as the main theme, but to demonstrate how instructional materials above the reading level of half of a class may be and must be made appropriate.

The consequences, to the child, when inappropriate instructional materials are assigned by the teacher, have been stated and discussed by many reading authorities. The paragraph under discussion here was clearly above

the level of many students in grade four. It would be highly inappropriate to assign it as a basis for independent work. However standards fall drastically in a grade eight class, for example, when a teacher uses two level instructional materials because three in her class read at that level. By catering to the lowest, the teacher drags down the whole class. On the other hand she cannot move blithely along as if the entire class can read what she has presented. It tests the skill of a teacher to its limits to "play" with the prose so as to teach the lowest to read it, while maintaining the interest of the highest students in the class. Generally, concern is expressed regarding materials which are too difficult for the reader, although materials which are too easy have received some attention. Materials which are too easy are considered not to provide a situation in which new reading skills and abilities can be acquired. They are materials which approximate a child's independent reading level, the level at which he/she can read and enjoy materials without guidance from the teacher. In terms of specific criteria this level is characterized by a word recognition score of 98-99 per-cent accuracy and a comprehension score of approximately 90 per-cent. Betts (1946) has observed that maximum development cannot be assured if instructional materials are at a level where the language and content of the material does not challenge the reader. Botel (1968) has made a similar observation and noted that instructional materials assigned at independent level do not provide a sufficient challenge to the reader and may result in disinterest.

On the other hand, materials which are too difficult present the learner with a different situation. Certainly there is little opportunity to acquire new skills since skills previously taught, but unlearned, continue to present obstacles in new material. In addition, however, the student is faced with a

learning situation where he/she cannot succeed and is consequently frustrating to him.

Materials in which students make excessive word recognition errors and demonstrate poor comprehension are designated as approximating frustration level. In such materials the learner scores less than 90 per-cent in word recognition and less than 50 per-cent in comprehension. These criteria for frustration level are cited by Betts (1946)

The materials which the teacher puts before the class and teaches from depends to a great extent on how the teacher teaches or handles instruction. You teach the story to the class reading it, looking at clauses, dress-up, doing choral reading, discussing sentence openers. Choral read it again. Discuss synonyms for various words. Read the story a final time. This class had read the story six times and is ready to do something with it. Teachers should be aware of the instructional, independent and frustration levels associated with the use of materials used in their classrooms.

Generally, reading authorities agree that poor reading is encouraged and reading progress impeded when teachers give seat-work to students which are too difficult for them to handle. Sheldon (1960) has remarked that:

> **...many reading specialists feel that if each child were given seat work at his/her independent level, with his/her instructional level frequently reassessed, reading failures would be reduced substantially and children would enjoy reading. (pp. 2-8)**

Kress (1960, 540-544) has noted that the principle factor, inhibiting reading progress for the child with a corrective reading problem, is the inability of the teacher to provide instruction within the child's present range of word-recognition and comprehension skills. Botel (1968) has summarized some of the effects of frustration level placement in observing that the resultant lack of success "leads to discouragement, loss of dignity or ego support, withdrawl

and often to hostility" (p. 171). The onus for avoiding such psychological manifestations and for providing instructional materials in which a child can succeed must be placed with the school system and ultimately with the classroom teacher.

While the importance of determining the instructional level of students has been stressed by many educational authorities; generally these authorities recommend the use of an informal reading inventory as an instrument for determining instructional level (ie., word recognition at 98 per-cent accuracy and comprehension at 90 per-cent accuracy). Despite the emphasis placed on the need for children to be assigned appropriate instructional materials the research would seem to indicate that this is a task which teachers either find extremely difficult or simply do not attempt to perform. Austin & Morrison, (1963) in an extensive study of reading practices in American elementary schools, describes what she found to be fairly typical of schools grouping procedures, as exemplified by one school in which twelve hundred children were enrolled, and where seventy-two reading groups were operating.

> **As the range of ability increased through the grades, the number of reading groups decreased, to the extent that twenty per-cent of the seventy-two groups were found in grade one, but only fourteen per-cent in grade six although enrollment remained constant. (p. 77)**

While there may be other explanations the assumption made here is that many students in this school, and in the schools of which it was typical, were learning to read from inappropriate materials. Gellerman (1948-'49), as early as 1948, revealed findings which pointed to teachers' difficulties or inabilities to adjust instructional materials to the instructional levels of their students. He analyzed the case studies of forty-eight children with reading difficulties.

He noted that thirty-one per-cent of the children had IQ's below ninety, but concluded that low intelligence alone accounted for only a few cases of reading difficulty. He states:

> **The overwhelming majority of reading difficulties among the intellectually sub-normal children were due primarily to instructional programs which were not adjusted to their needs. (p. 526)**

He further remarks that although low intelligence might cause a child to fall behind in reading, other factors kept him/her behind. These factors he called complicating factors and added that the chief complicating factors in the case studies" involved improper instructional remedial techniques" (p. 526). Of these two factors he considered the first to be so wide spread that it was deserving of special emphasis.

Long (1959) in a study involving 153 slow readers from grades two, four and six, reported that "teachers at all grade levels were instructing the slow readers in materials too difficult for them" (p. 34). She noted that some of the teachers involved in the study were able to correctly identify the particular reading difficulties of their students. The majority of these same teachers, however, still instructed the slow readers in materials which were too difficult. One teacher was reported as being aware that all sixth grade work was beyond a certain child's grasp. She nevertheless continued to instruct the child at the sixth grade level. It could be asked; "Was she instructing or assigning at the wrong level?" While instructing did she so "lay" with the reading so as to ensure that all could master it or did she present the paragraph and launch immediately into teaching the skill of sentence openers and variety. Presumably she followed the latter course. Generally teachers have been condemned for using instructional materials above the reading level of the slower students. In reaction some teachers search for grade two

reading level for a grade six class. In the first instance she offends a minority, in the second she cheats the majority.

Let us assume that the teacher who had been successfully instructing at the "conglomerate - monopoly" level decides a week later that she will assign an exercise in sentence openers which the class will be expected to complete without her assistance. Because there is no pre-teaching, she will be compelled to prepare reading appropriate to level. Those five lowest students who read at a grade two level will be expected to demonstrate sentence openers (see below) with a paragraph at the level of the following sentence.

The boy who lived beside me, raced away from the gang.

Prepositional:	**In the evening, the boy who lived...**
"ly"	**Rapidly the boy who lived...**
"ing"	**Jumping over the fence, the boy who lived...**
Clausal:	**When the noise began, the boy who lived...**
VSS:	**The boy raced away.**

Thus the skill can be mastered and demonstrated at the "conglomerate-monopoly" or "racing boy" level. Consequently a good teacher instructs at grade level and assigns at ability level. Unfortunately teachers of the intermediate grades often assume that if a child has not learned to read by grade five, he/she never will. They further feel that teaching reading is not their concern and such children should be placed in special classes. Clearly it is much easier to prepare one assignment and give it to the entire class.

Millsap (1962), in her study, was directly interested in whether or not teachers assigned students instructional material (in this case basal readers) which were at frustration level. The teachers involved were asked to appraise the suitability of material after seeing transcripts of materials read by students with all word recognition errors, and answers to comprehension questions, recorded. In addition, they were given unmarked transcripts and

asked to listen to the recorded voices of students and decide on the appropriateness of the material for the reader. Millsap concluded that the teachers were aware of the frustration level reading in seventy per-cent of the cases but were unaware in the remaining thirty per-cent. The teachers indicated to Millsap that they assigned instructional materials on the bases of a student's reading performance in the materials, but Millsap concluded that they did not "possess clear, definite and objective standards" (p. 1081) to apply to the reading performance.

Within this chapter, no specific attempt has been made to describe the various learning deficits or problems exhibited by children though it must be acknowledged that they do, indeed, exist. Anderson & Smith (1983) found that less effective teachers were unaware of and did nothing to address students' preconceptions. That is, less effective teachers provided infrequent opportunities for the identification of student (mis)conceptions, resulting in little or no action on the part of these teachers to modify their instruction. This is particularly relevant in light of the potentially debilitating effects of students' misconceptions on their learning and comprehension. This effect has been demonstrated in content area reading (Roth, 1985) and in general comprehension of text (Maria & MacGinitie, 1981). Teachers should always be aware of the characteristics of their learners and must consequently assign materials which the learner can accommodate. Teachers should match the reader's skills to material difficulty which is based on concept level and syntactical complexity. The teacher's selection of appropriate materials enhances the students' ability to be successful at their own level of competence. Thus it is important to identify the potential effects of teachers' instructional beliefs on the utilization of classroom practice in their students' instructional materials.

The task of assigning appropriate instructional materials is a demanding and exacting one. It is however, one which needs to be met if children are to meet success experiences within the context of the instructional programme.

It has been suggested that teachers tend to assign material at grade level regardless of the ability range within the class (Anastasiow, 1964, 392-395). It should be noted that this factor cannot apply to all classroom teachers. It is also evident that teachers can be aware of assigning inappropriate materials, and of the reading difficulties of some of their students, and yet not be persuaded by this awareness to modify instruction in the form of using materials which cause the children to be less frustrated. There is a great deal of work to be done at the school level by curriculum co-ordinators, administrators, counsellors and teachers because the ability to assign appropriate instructional reading materials can be classified as an effective teacher behaviour. Of even greater importance was the direction these studies gave to the need for specificity in exploring teacher characteristics as these may be related to aspects of teaching behaviour since a strong reading programme becomes a prerequisite to and a foundation of good writing.

THE WRITING PROCESS

Researchers and educators such as Frank Smith, Donald Graves, Donald Murray, Lucy Calkins, Sondra Perl, John Stewig and others have recorded a great deal about the writing process. This researcher feels that a brief look at what they have given us is useful in setting forth on the journey which this present study undertakes.

We owe a grat deal to the psycholinguistic theorists for their contributions to research in the teaching of reading and writing. They have provided insights into the structure of language, the meaning of reading, and

many important factors influencing learning to read and write. This study supports the link between a childs' ability with oral language and success in learning to read and write. The studies in early literacy attest to the importance of a literary environment. This researcher agrees with Rosenblatt (1982) for her, "reading is a transition, a two way process, involving the reader [writer] and the text at a particular time under particular circumstances" (p. 268). She believes the two important elements to be reader [writer] and text.

Donald Graves, (1983) suggests that students learn the craft of writing through writing itself. While he views writing as a holistic process where learning takes place through the gradual development of the various aspects of the entire process, the importance of learning and the cognitive activities of the writer are stressed rather than the examination of the written product. Graves (1973) categorizes the stages in the writing process as pre-writing, composing, and post-writing.

Donald Murray refers to the writing process as "rehearsal, drafting, revision and editing" (cited in Calkins, 1986, p. 17). Throughout the writing process shifting occurs between rehearsal, drafting, revision and editing where students may be involved in any or all stages at a given time. This concept is similar to that of Freire's (1985). Murray (1984) writes:

> **...the act of writing is inseperable from the act of reading. You can read without writing, but you can't write without reading. The reading skills required, however, to decode someone else's finished text may be quite different from the reading skills required to chase a wisp of thinking until it grows into a completed thought" (p. 141).**

Sondra Perl (1986) studied the composing processes of writers. For her study she used unskilled college writers. Perl noted that many of the stages identified by Graves and Murray such as pre-writing, writing and editing

"appeared in a sequential pattern that was recognizable across writing sessions and across students" (p. 29).

Lucy McCormick-Calkins (1986,) in her book advocates an interactive model of learning and supports the use of oral language in writing. She also stresses the importance of teachers becoming observers and questioners of children's writing in order to extend the development of the child and indeed the teacher.

Much of the recent research in the area of writing assumes the importance of oral language and an approach to writing which emphasizes meaning and communication (Graves, 1985; McCormick-Calkins, 1986; Britton, (1975) and Moffett & Wagner (1983).

Halliday's (1982) functional-interaction model of emergent oral language use has implications for written language. This model emphasizes that children learn language in context and through interaction with others in social situations. Written language then must be both situational and therefore within a meaningful context and it must also be embedded in social interaction. It is an observation by this researcher that the new Language Learning Document of Alberta Education reflects a great deal on the work of Halliday.

Halliday (1975) points out that children learn language and how to use it, simultaneously. Smith (1983, 170) argues that "not just language and its uses are learned simultaneously, but ... it is through its uses that language is learned. McCormick-Calkins (1986) takes the concept of Smith and applies it to the area of writing. She writes that 'thinking' shows itself, as children begin to revise, as they begin to engage in conferences with teachers and peers, and finally that the thinking truly manifests itself as the children begin to interact with their own texts without assistance of another. Calkins (1986) believes

that writing is a means of pulling ideas together, rather than an exercise to show what one knows about other content areas.

In summary, the literature and research on literary response in language learning; (a) affirms the primary importance of response to the reading process and the growth of the individual, (b) identifies various categories and levels of response, and (c) confirms the importance of classroom climate and the role of the teacher in facilitating response. The theory of literacy transaction provides a holistic basis for our approach to the reading process and literacy. The implementation of theory and research knowledge manifest themselves in a response-centered, literature-based curriculum. In all discussion sessions the teacher works diligently to instill and reinforce the students' reading. It is important that children see literature as open to a variety of interpretations and to speculate about the author's reasons for writing in a particular way. What the teacher is doing is encouraging their students' to think deeply, and to engage in reflection upon what they have read. Much like the development of observation skills. Children should be encouraged to develop observation skills and then to describe in telling fashion what they have observed. This will help improve their writing. Keen observation skills and ways to describe what was observed are important. Searching for exactly the right words to tell a reader about what was observed is problem solving of the highest order. It should be emphasized that the word right is not synonymous with correct. What this researcher is talking about has nothing to do with correctness in either a grammatical or a mechanical sense. It means helping children understand the joy that can come from finally thinking of the right word to put into print - the essence of the idea they want to share.

Sharing is important. It is vital for children to read widely, to themselves, to their peers, and to younger children using material which they have written or which has been written by other children so that they understand that writing is a legitimate activity for children and not just something limited to adults Thus, the reading programme is a foundation to and works in tandem with the writing programme.

The brief review of research on the process of writing reveals the importance of oral language as it relates to the process of writing. While important, the role of such things as co-operative learning and peer writing were not examined in this review. Also, while the development of literacy is an important topic, worth considering at length, this study focused on the other half of that interlinked competency: written language.

Chapters III and IV are included in order for the reader to understand more fully Webster's Structure and Style programme. Structure evolving from the larger framework will be examined in Chapter III and Style will be reviewed in Chapter IV.

Chapter III

STRUCTURE: THE EVOLVING LARGER FRAMEWORK

Because Blended Structure and Style has not been previously studied through formal research it was necessary to provide some description of Structure and Style and to show how it works in tandem with the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning.

Unfortunately structure has not been a very popular word in educational circles for the last number of years. Webster's New World Dictionary - College Edition (1964) defines structure as something made up of more or less interrelated elements and having a definite organizational pattern. Rather than structure in reference to regimentation this researcher uses the word to imply success-like strategies, clear guidelines, explicit expectations to help both teacher and student work toward common goals. For this researcher model and demonstrate are synonymous with structure and are used interchangeably to describe structure. Thus it is this researcher's contention that structure makes a difference: it helps clarify your expectations of students, it assists students in making decisions without telling them what to do, and it increases students' chances for success. Because structure influences many aspects of the writing, its importance can be profound. Roger Barker's (1968) work in ecological psychology is especially articulate in making the point that structures along with conferences help children shape and reshape their writing . Dr. Webster makes it very clear in his workshops that standards for students should be no hidden agenda. Structures are not deleterious. The writer should be able to note which structure's are and are not conducive to the attainment of success for a particular writing task. Candy Carter (1982) states:

> **The security provided by the structure gives students the freedom to take their creativity to the limits, simply because they know what the limits are. Structure does not have to equal boredom and the death of creativity if you are willing to structure for success. (p. 3)**

In Blended Structure and Style, writing is a process that can be developed. Certainly it is a process infused with art; in all skills there is a place for individuality, creativity, and unique expression of ideas. BSS takes the natural ability and interest of children and show them how they can improve their ability. To help children become better writers, able to produce more effective writing Blended Structure and Style engages in a process of reshaping through structure and style.

The structures focus on the kinds of writing children will do and the strategies used to develop writing. As children implement the structures in their compositions and in group discussions they are encouraged to expand, combine, or transform them. Thus fostering an awareness that a writer is seldom if ever limited to one way of saying something. These structures can be used no matter what topic children are using. To justify the use of structures, the major purpose of Blended Structure and Style must be repeated. The purpose is to help children write better, to produce more effective writing. If we are going to justify including large blocks of time for writing, results must point to the effectiveness of the time spent. Particularly in an age when accountability is crucial, we must be able to point to the results of what we do with children. The use of models is offered as a way of helping children become better writers. It is further offered as a realistic approach in that it bears greater resemblance to the way adult writers work. In the process of looking at their own writing, examining it to determine where they want to make changes or alterations, children can become better

writers. They learn to become analytic about their writing and interested in the process of improving what they write.

Beginning to write can be compared to learning how to build houses. First you begin with a simple building within which certain structures will remain fundamental. The fundamentals of a house include vertical walls, horizontal floors, enclosed rooms with doors and usually square or rectangular windows. Even if the builder goes on to design the Civilization of Man Museum in Ottawa, the fundamentals of structure will remain. So the beginning writer learns that a composition also has a structure, including, paragraphs, topic and clincher sentences, introduction and conclusion although structure is not limited to these alone. As with the simple cottage and the museum the fundamentals do not change. In house building as in composition there are the mechanics of plumbing and electrical lines in the former and of punctuation and spelling in the latter. The lack of which would show deficiencies in either the house or the composition. Mechanically speaking the bathroom must have a window or vented fan or those who live there put up with the smell. So in writing, spelling and capitals must be there or the reader is left with a bad smell or taste. Mechanics like structure are fundamental and change ever so slowly. Building style relates to colours, the mixture of wood and stone, the blending of carpet and tile. Writing style relates to the use of subordinate clauses, similes, variety in sentence openers and length. Structure and mechanics have changed little over the centuries while style is usually very fluid even though we often talk of a classic form. The house begins with structure. The composition also begins with structure. Composition and houses are impossible without it. The blueprint brings you to the point where you are ready to construct. Thus the blueprint is a selection process of how to put together the essential

structure. A teacher must be able to provide the necessary oral and written structure by careful planning of themes to correlate reading and writing development.

A study undertaken in Winnipeg, Manitoba by Schewe and Froese and reported on in Research in Literacy: Merging Perspectives (1989, pp. 273 - 278) concludes that "(1) Reading comprehension measures and writing ability measures were significantly related. The subject's ability in responding to inferential probes on reading passages was the best predictor of writing ability and the ability to effectively use story structure in writing. (2) Written language production may well be a reciprocal act demanding an equal level of in-depth processing (as opposed to the task demands made in reading recall and written production). (3) The ability to recall story grammar elements during reading was not indicative of the ability to produce the same elements in writing. Further, writing ability, but not reading ability, was a valid predictor of story structure production in writing. (4) It would appear that the use of story schema in recalling text emerges well in advance of the use of story schema in producing text. (5) The mechanics and story grammar category components of the analytic writing scale were the best predictors of writing quality (p. 278). Of the writing aspects measured in this study, mechanics and story structure were the best correlates of writing quality. The researches do add however, "that many aspects of the writing process (awareness of audiences, teacher influence, social context), however, were not assessed in this study. These variables do not readily lend themselves to assessment, but may be equally influential in their impact on writing quality" (p. 278).

Also, the ability of the teacher to ask questions is vital. The teacher must be able to look at what children have written and ask the appropriate

questions to help them consider their own writing. Such questions will encourage children to analyze the writing to determine what parts of it are fine and strong and what parts could profit from more thought. This strategy is also something which is encouraged and developed throughout the programme where the children think about aspects of their own writing. The purpose of teacher questioning or self questioning is to develop habits of reflecting upon, thinking about, and reacting to written material. Each child will develop this ability at his/her own level. Some will become adept at it; others will have less success. Questioning does not become an end in and of itself but rather a means of encouraging this reflective attitude toward writing.

The use of children's literature with a meaning emphasis does not have to preclude structure. What is needed is an approach which combines the two in a complimentary manner. The techniques are mutually supportive and can be taught in a manner which makes the interrelationships clear to students (Trachtenburg, 1990, 648) thus being an excellent tool in developing positive self-image. There is definitely a correlation between learning to write and self-esteem. Poor writers often equate writing difficulty with failure (Gentile, & McMillan, 1987, 170-178). The failure to learn to write contributes to the students sense of alienation from school and to the drop-out problem. (Padak, & Vacca, 1960, 486-488). Could it be that the attempt to meet students needs lies in the lack of structure which is actually causing some of the writing problems? This is a question which certainly needs further study.

As with the creation of any structure, writing has to be practiced in order for the writer to gain proficiency. One problem with many writing programmes is that students spend very little time actually writing. One way

of solving this problem is to develop a cross-subject structured writing programme. In examining the many facets of writing programmes and noting their individual strengths and weaknesses, it appears that no individual programme or set of materials meets all students' needs in learning to write. The key factor in the classroom becomes the programme combined with the teacher. The expectations of the teacher influences the learning of the students. By teaching the writing skills to the entire group, all students have the same opportunity to learn to be competent writers. If teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic, they will have a positive effect on the success of student learning in their classroom (Durkin, 1978, 11). The teacher needs to blend the best features of numerous approaches into a single comprehensive integrated system to meet the needs of children with varying tastes, interests, speeds and abilities (Ingham, 1972). This can only be done by a teacher who believes that all children can learn, and is willing to work toward that end.

Introducing structures to the class as a whole helps to raise the level of the lower students. From this researchers' experience it is necessary to supplement the faster learners to keep them challenged, but the atmosphere of the entire class is higher in whole group instruction, when teaching is directed to upper and lower level students. It seems to raise the level of learning of all students. There is an atmosphere of success in the classroom. After the initial introduction of structures, the majority of students will work independently.

Because students do not learn at the same rate, it is important for the teacher to have several different approaches to present the same skill. Students learn through repetition, but the repetition must be varied to maintain interest and enthusiasm. The method of writing instruction

described in this chapter is universal from beginning students in grade one to students in grade twelve and indeed students at the university level. Good teaching involves selecting appropriate procedures. They apply at multi-levels. Variations occur in pacing. Variations occur in writing levels. But the Blended Structure and Style programme recommends that the introduction of concepts be taught to the class as a whole. While teachers must use materials at the appropriate level of instruction for their students and use methods of teaching writing techniques which are appropriate for their students, variations will occur in pacing because of the wide level of abilities found within each classroom.

In 1991-1992 Dr. Webster tracked the writing progress of a number of grade five and seven students in Richmond, British Columbia, whose teachers were following the Blended Structure and Style programme. He found that the emphasis upon structure appealed to the lowest segment of three classes under the instruction of three different teachers. Grades and marks of the lowest group rose to the average. After seven months one could not identify the lowest from the average. He speculates that the top and upper average because they had read more widely, had grasped ideas of structure - at least limited ones - and applied them in the their writing. This was why these students had reached the top and high average. Once the teachers began to set forth structures for students to follow, the dramatic improvement showed up first among the lowest segment of the students. Initially it appeared as if the method benefitted the poorer students far more than it did the top half of the class.

This had not operated according to Webster's personal experience in teaching the writing programme. In analysis of the problem, he believed that the teachers were actually aiming to bring the entire class to a standard. In

this they were succeeding. Since the parents were enthusiastic, the students pleased with themselves, therefore the teachers were delighted. It seemed to Webster that one he was worried. In his analysis he has come to believe that the teachers had not urged the top students into techniques of style above grade level. This arose partly because they were following the programme for the first time and did not know what to give students performing at a higher level and partly because of the ingrained idea of a grade standard to which they always attempted to bring the whole class. [From the researchers personal communication with J. B. Webster.]. In this they were miraculously succeeding despite the fact that the better students might be standing still. Compare with builders, all of whom build straight walls, construct good roofs and mount ordinary windows. Even the best of them are not carried forward to more stylish ideas of sunken or split level floors, bay or octagonal windows, and circular staircases. However this chapter focuses upon structure and this side-track into style has been designed to make the point, that the Blended Structure and Style programme insists upon meeting the needs of all levels, that structure can do wonders for poor students but that upper students must be prodded to strain and work equally with the rest of the class.

This programme of learning teaches eight different structures of writing. These are shown below in the sequence which they might be taught. There is a cumulative skill development as you move through the ten units. Whether one teaches primary, elementary, secondary or university one should begin at unit one and proceed through unit ten. The only difference between teaching primary or secondary is that the level of reading material and pacing will change. Furthermore, reading materials employed should always cover the range and reading abilities within the class. Reading should

be easy, in order to allow the students to concentrate upon writing skills. All marking comments should be directed toward the specific point of structures which have been taught. As in any other endeavor, writing requires practice. Once this programme is begun, it should be pursued every school day without fail. In the units listed below, it should be noted that following one unit on note-taking and another on summarizing, there are two streams in the syllabus; one moving toward the goal of essay writing, the other to creative writing. By the completion of the course, a student has at his command, eight distinct structures of writing - or models - from which to choose when deciding upon the approach to any specific writing problem or assignment

Written Communication Syllabus

Grade Level	Creative Writing	Units	Essay Writing	Subj. Transfer
All grades		1. Note Making 2. Summaries from Notes		
All grades	3. Story Summaries			
Grade Two Onward	5. Stories from Pictures		4. Summarizing References	Science
Grade Three Onward	7. Creative Writing		6. Library Reports	Health/Geography
Grade Four Onward	9. Critiques		8. Essay Writing	History

(Webster, J.B., 1988, 4)

Within the syllabus, the author recommends that grade one can achieve to the end of unit three. Unit three employs the Ingham model as demonstrated in her text (1972, 139). Grade three should complete from unit one to seven and grades four and onward, all units. It must be stressed that teachers of all grades above three begin with unit one and move through the entire syllabus in sequence since there is an accumulative build up of skills.

In the high school, units one to five might be completed in two weeks for each. The high school teacher normally wishes to get to research reports, creative writing and essays as quickly as possible. This syllabus goes against current assumptions and suggests the radical idea that one follows the same programme whether one is teaching grade four or first year university. A grade three paragraph must possess a topic sentence in the same way as in a grade twelve essay. A grade one story about a cat must have a good ending - a final clincher - just like a university essay analyzing the Cold War, just as a frame cottage and a great museum must have a level floor.

In classes, where one teacher is responsible for content subjects as well as language, once unit four on summarizing a reference has been taught and partially mastered in the language arts period, further practice of a continuous nature can be achieved by transferring the skill to one of the content subjects. The syllabus suggests transferral to science. By the completion of unit eight, students are summarizing references in the science period, doing research projects in health and essays in social studies. In the language arts or English period they are beginning the unit on critiques. In theory, the class is practising four different writing styles each week. In high school, where there is a separate teacher for each subject, this intensity of concentration might be possible with careful co-ordination. It would not be easy in most situations.

The work of Dr. Webster's most successful application of the transfer system was in a school where he was responsible for the English and Social Studies curricula for the junior high grades. This doubled the writing practice of the students. Transferring provides practice. Transferring demonstrates relevance. Within this method of teaching, the multi-subject teacher secures marked advantages over the specialist in a single discipline. This method of learning stresses modelling and demonstrating. Besides the Ingham model

in unit three, others are introduced during subsequent units. To some this method, at times, may appear mechanical. Within the boundaries of the model, there is ample room for creativity. Creativity to this researcher is considered a part of style and will be discussed in a later chapter.

This programme is a pragmatic philosophy of written communication. It is a practical "how to" programme of teaching writing which has been developed in the classroom. It has inspired confidence and enthusiasm in the majority of students who have applied it. (Ingham, 1972, preface.) It generates excitement such that the majority of students will write on topics of their own choosing, above and beyond that assigned in class.

Structure aides pupils with their writing and reshaping. A number of investigators have been interested in generative writing tasks or "writing to learn". Doctorow, Wittrock and Marks (1978) doubled the comprehension of sixth graders by teaching them to insert paragraph headings and to generate sentences about paragraphs. Sawkins (1971) found that most children gave some thought to the content (pre-writing) before starting, but that few wrote down notes or an outline. Compared to those who wrote poor stories, those who wrote good stories were better able to discuss writing techniques, and used paragraphing more often. It is one thing to be told what to do; clearly it is far superior to be able to see how it is done. Students and parents have praised the BSS programme as reported to the author in conversation with the researcher. They have reported that when in doubt as how to proceed on a technique, students studied a model and followed the pattern. Teachers want to help children achieve the maturity and objectivity about writing that will allow them to question and consider what they have written. Such questions as: "Is there any place where I can leave something out?; Is there anywhere that I can combine two sentences into one sentence?; "Are my

descriptive words vivid?" Or "Do I need to rearrange the sequence?; Do I need to relocate some sentences for greater effectiveness?" It should be noted that the rapidity with which children move into reshaping depends upon their general language ability, and upon the experiences which they have previously had, if any, with reshaping.

While the use of the computer is not the subject of this study the researcher felt that a brief mention of it was important. If students wish to reduce the pain and labour of drafting and redrafting then use a word processor. While most students must re-draft and edit more than once or twice, a student will find the use of a word processor most advantageous. Just ask this researcher. Writing is a process. You write. We edit. You re-write. Typing and even more handwriting entails hours of laborious labour of limited productive value. By using the processor, labour is reduced from hours to minutes. Inevitably students of the nineties enter a work force in which computers, word processors and fax machines form standard equipment. Master them. Become computer literate. Begin now (Lartner, 1987; Peet, 1987). However, although the tools may change, structures are forever. Education does not consist in what you know but rather in how rapidly you can find the information you need and present it within an acceptable structure.

The emphasis of this chapter has been on structure. In the Webster programme five structured models are stressed (see Appendix B). Of course, they are not the only writing models. Because writing models are legion, it does not mean that students should be taught none of them, or told "to do their own thing". They provide for organization of material and thought. The models demonstrate the minimum requirements which should appear, for example, in an introduction and conclusion. While it is true that the

topic sentence may be located anywhere in a paragraph, if you teach that as a principle, in many cases you will not get a topic sentence, or you will become engaged in a debate with the writer as to where a topic sentence can come for best effect or which sentence is the topic. The most common location is for the topic sentence to come at the beginning of the paragraph. Put it where the writer, reader and marker know where to find it. Since the topic should convey the main idea of the paragraph it needs stressing above the details. Consequently the clincher comes back to that topic again. The problem of paragraph unity disappears. As in any organization from a social group to a soccer game to a composition, structure requires strategies. One does not introduce a hundred rules to a beginning writer. Strategies are introduced over the span of the syllabus and the marker reads a composition to be sure the strategies taught so far, have been followed. New strategies are introduced and the next composition is marked with the accumulated ones in mind. In actual classroom teaching, structure, mechanics and style are taught in an interwoven manner. However for the purpose of analysis, this chapter will focus upon structure exclusively from note-outlines to essays and from note-outlines to creative writing. Within the corpus of English literature there is an infinite variety of organizational structures. The Blended Sound-Sight suggests that the role of the teacher is to select one for children and teach them how to employ it.

It has been this researcher's observation that young children, and even those in high school, remain primarily concerned about content. They have something to say and the role of the teacher is to show them how best to say it. It has been argued earlier in this thesis that teachers often become so conscious of mechanics, that they may not even comment upon content. There are two other options open to the teacher. She may write on the

bottom of a composition, "Very interesting argument. Keep up the good work" or some other from of encouragement. Or she may work with the student in conference together editing the work seeking to enhance what the writer is attempting to convey. Show that by holding back the climax, the ending does not become "a let down". Show how by inserting one or two subordinate clauses one can develop characters just a little more so that the reader surmises what the ending might be. Help the child to enhance the setting to create more mystery, more tension or more intolerance depending what the narrative requires. In argumentation point out that a major argument of the opposition can not be ignored but must be dealt with. Help the writer to deal with it. The first option may be better than nothing but rapidly looses its impact when the child discovers something like it has been written on every composition in the class. In the second option, the writer feels the genuine interest of the teacher in what they have discussed together. There is of course the tragic option - far too prevalent - where the marker concentrates corrections exclusively on mechanics. That option destroys self-image. The second option further encourages a re-write, in fact may make the writer eager to do so. Re-shaping merely to correct mechanics is a form of punishment. Re-writing to improve the impact of the story or argument, can generate enthusiasm. During their school life students will repeatedly be asked to write reports and essays and they should have structure to follow. If after they master these structures, they wish to proceed to invent and create their own, that is fine but most will follow the structure taught them. Furthermore if students know one structure, they will come to recognize others. They become structure conscious.

The structure proposed by Webster in the Blended Structure and Style involves a note outline where the Roman number indicates the topic

sentence and the clincher repeats or reflects the key words of it. This guarantees paragraph unity. Arabic numbers represent details and should range between three and five. The rule restricting details guarantees balance between one paragraph and the other so that the composition is not marred by very short paragraphs preceding or following very long ones, one theme over-developed and one threadbare. Three paragraphs such as this create the body of the composition. The composition must end well. This becomes a difficult concept for many students. Webster therefore suggests that the final clincher, the last sentence of the composition should repeat or reflect the words of the title. Finally each number in the outline should contain not more than three words. This guarantees that the outline does not stretch into a half written composition, that it remains concise and short. Thus there are five basic and simple rules for an outline and its composition:

1. **Outline limited to three key words per number.**
2. **Topic - clincher relationship.**
3. **Limited range of details.**
4. **Three paragraphs make a composition.**
5. **The final sentence reflects the title.**

This three paragraph composition becomes useful for report and descriptive writing. Once students have become familiar with this structure, they may add to it by beginning with an introductory paragraph and ending with a conclusion. The introductory and concluding paragraphs deviate little from the body except they do not have topic sentences. They are the same approximate size as the body paragraphs. Essentially the introduction introduces the three themes (or topics) which are to be discussed in the three paragraphs of the body. The conclusion comes back to the three themes again, selects one as the most important or most interesting and explains why. The "why?" introduces students to the concept of analysis. The final clincher now is moved to the last sentence of the conclusion and as before it should repeat

or reflect the title. Most senior teachers are aware of the student - far too common - who writes on a topic "The Occupations of the Yangtse Valley" and ends the composition about the Forbidden City. If the structure insists that the final sentence must come back to the title, such wandering off track becomes automatically presented. Just as a grade two paragraph on the appearance of a cat can not end discussing the litter box. As a result of adding an introduction and conclusion the composition has now become a five-paragraph essay or descriptive composition.

In diagram one below the note outline for a paragraph has been shown. Three such outlines create the three-paragraph composition. To this is added an introduction and conclusion to produce the essay. The evolution of the note outline into an essay has been diagrammed for quick observation. It demonstrates the structural evolution like the building of a house. The outline shows the skeleton, foundation, studs and rafters of the house, then the three rooms are walled in with topic and related clincher as the paragraphs are written. The diagramatic structure to the right hand of the page leads to a five-paragraph basic essay or more elaborate descriptive composition. Later a room is added on the front - the introduction - and a room at the back - the conclusion - which adds up to a five room cottage like a five paragraph composition.

First Note Outline: Building into Two Composition Structures

Structure of Introduction
Background
1. time
2. place
3. three themes
No clincher

I. Topic of Paragraph
1.
2. details
3.
Clincher

1. Topic of Paragraph
1.
2. details
3.
Clincher

II. Topic of Paragraph
1.
2. details
3.
Clincher

III. Topic of Paragraph
1.
2. details
3.
Clincher

II. Topic of Paragraph
1.
2. details
3.
Clincher

III. Topic of Paragraph
1.
2. details
3.
Clincher

Structure of Conclusion
Review Themes
1. Most N.B.
2. Why?
Clincher: Title

Applicable to: Library Reports
Descriptive Compositions

Basic Essay
Descriptive Compositions

Actual compositions are demonstrated below. The first "The Battle of the Bugs" demonstrates an example of a three-paragraph piece of descriptive writing in fiction, following the structure diagrammed to the left hand side of the page above. In the second, "Terns at War" the result is more like a library report following the same structure. Alongside "Terns at War" appears the note outline which preceded it and from which it was written. Below the three-paragraph report the introduction and conclusion have been produced which would turn "Terns at War" from a report into an essay. All of these compositions obey the five fundamental rules of structure as detailed.

I. Topic: insect investation

Battle of the Bugs

1 Biology has not catalogued the insect hordes of wireworms, coddling moths and mosquitoes which had invaded the garden.

2 They had prepared the way for the advance of the army worms.

3 Marching in battalions, they launched a frontal assault on the

4 flowers. The army worm brigades swept the ground and the

5	caterpillars pitched their tents in the trees. They stripped them
Clincher:	naked. They devastated everything which had survived
insect invastation	the earlier military onslaughts. The insect hordes had invaded in
	wave after wave and the garden resembled a battle-scarred city.
II. Topic: Technology	Technology fought back and so did the plants. War material
1	which included insecticides and herbicides, sprays and medicated
2	water was expensive. The flowers had counterattacked putting
3	forward a few timid leaves. Technology had assassinated the ants
	and slew the bugs, had firebombed the caterpillars and butchered
4,5	the bark beetles. Spraying had never ceased. Fertilized with manure,
	fertilized with nitrates and fertilized with phosphates the plants
Clincher: Technology	battled for their lives. Technology and the plants fought back and
	triumphed.
III. Topic: love	One night two tiny aphids had made love. While
1	technology slept, three million babies which had thrived on the
2	chemicals, consumed the garden. It was a wasteland, the soil
3	ruined, the earth polluted. The rains descended. The winds blew.
4,5	The snow fell. The experience reminded technology of the
Clincher: love and title	power of love over war in the battle of the bugs.

Terns at War

I. varieties, fifty
1. Pacific royals, elegants
2. all sit facing
3. royals white flecks
Clincher: species , colours, friendly

II. all kinds, weather
1. Sable, Caribbean
2. fairy, atolls, Pacific
3. Arctic pole-pole
Clincher: adapt, types, climate

Terns at War

There exists fifty varieties of terns. They include royals and elegants in the Pacific. All slender and sleek terns sit facing the strong wind. The courageous royals boast flecks of white. There appears to be many species and colours and all terns seem to be friendly each other.

Terns enjoy all kinds of vile and inclement weather. Some take flight from dismal Sable Island to reach the sunny Caribbean. The dainty fairy tern inhabits windy atolls in the Pacific while strong Arctic terns travel from barren pole to the other. They adapt to all types of frigid and tropical climates.

III. war, Raza, Sable 1. aggressors 2. increase, fewer 3. chicks in danger Clincher: war, winners	A war rages continuously between terns and gulls on Raza and Sable islands. The gulls become the fierce aggressors and nest robbers. On Isla Raza the terns are speedily increasing while on Sable they are becoming fewer. The chicks constantly live in danger because they may be eaten by the gulls. While the gulls are winning the war on Sable, the terns have been victorious on Raza island.

Additions to "Terns at War": Converting a Library Report to an Essay

Introduction background 1. place 2. time 3. Three themes (underlined)	Terns usually boast white feathers marked with brown. They inhabit regions surrounding all oceans of the world. At nesting time they prefer small rocky islands uninhabited by humans. Numerous varieties of terns exist who adapt to all types of climates. Their major enemies, the gulls battle with the terns especially at nesting time.
Conclusion Review Three Themes (underlined) Clincher: Title Most N.B (interesting) Why? (because) Clincher: title	The many varieties of terns living in frigid to tropical climates carry on an exciting war against their enemies the gulls. Since uninhabited islands in the world have become fewer, the gulls and terns battle over them. That is the most interesting aspect of their life because at nesting time the terns seem to fear humans more than gulls. Terns at war sometimes defeat the gulls but never overcome them.

Moving from Diagram One above, we then change to Diagram Two shown below where the note outline follows the sequence chart, first creating a summary, then children write their own stories and finally by adding introductions and conclusions, the same model may produce a critique. We

shall illustrate this evolution by using one of Grimm's Fairy Tales, The Cat and The Mouse in Partnership. (Grimm, 1963, 63). (See Appendix B)

Second Note Outline: Building into Two Composition Structures

Introduction
I.
1.
2.
3.
Clincher: Title

Story Sequence Chart

I. Who
1.
2.

II. What
1.
2.

III. Climax
1.
2.

Clincher: Title

I.
Paragraph

II.
Paragraph

III.
Paragraph

I.
Paragraph

II.
Paragraph

III.
Paragraph

Conclusion
I.
1.
2.
3.
Clincher: Title

1. Summarizing a Story
2. Writing their own Narrative Story.

Critiques (Model shown below)

The Cat and Mouse

Catastrophe in the Cathedral

by

Norma Zdunic

Brooding, forboding, depressing skies

watched the smirking strutting tom cat waltz the timid grey mouse into his dingy den. Tom was tickled pink because he had tricked her into a partnership. Unknowingly, she would provide for his comforts in more ways than one. During the long winter, they were to dine on the jar of fat which she had pleasingly provided and he had deposited in the feline cathedral which stood close by. When the time came, the culprit planned to reap dividends from this investment. "Mouse munchies", he murmured.

The cagey cat devised a plan as criminal as a carnal catechism. Not once, not twice, but thrice he craftily announced his intentions to stand god-father at a christening. Not once, not twice, but thrice, he slunk to the cathedral. While the naive house mouse busied herself attending to his creature comforts, the felonious feline was investured upon the altar, lapping lard. Wickedly, he thought of names for his fictional grandsons. Scratching his full hairy belly, he reviewed, revised, and reinvented his agends. During the third trip, the lovely lard which the unsuspecting mouse had provided was finished. The rodent was doomed. Winter approached. Stomachs growled.

Provisions beckoned. Through-out the fall, the dear dumb mouse had pondered the meaning of the god-son's names. "Top-off? Half-Gone? All-gone?" They merely served to remind her that the pantry was empty. When she asked her horrible housemate to escort her to the cathedral, he readily agreed. Striding through the frigid night, he smacked his lips in anticipation. Eagerly, the trusting little twit skittered into the cathedral. Bewilderment turned to horror as she assessed the empty, grease-streaked jar and the cat's gluttonous

grin. All was revealed. He reached out and caressed her with claws unsheathed. The choir caterwauled "This catastrophe in the cathedral, mistake though it be, will not become an opportunity to learn.

The above forms a three-paragraph summary of the original fable. If the reader reads the original in the appendix and compares it with the summary, he/she will readily see that a great deal of creativity has gone into the latter. The plot is the same but the structure and style of the two are both very different. As previously noted, the summary may be converted into a critique by the addition of an introduction and conclusion, following the structure suggested in the critique model as shown below. In the three paragraphs of the body the critique model follows sequence model. The "who" now becomes "characters," the "what happened" becomes the "conflict and plot". The real addition is that the critique model possesses an introduction and conclusion converting it from a three - to five - paragraph composition.

Critique Model

	Introduction	Type of story "story title" Book Title, author, publisher date, pages, illustrations: no. and quality.
I.	Characters	People or animals participating in the story.
	Setting	Place, time and mood of the story.
II.	Conflict	Problems that must be solved.
	Plot	The plan of the story.
III.	Climax	Turning point of the story.
	Theme	Message about life the author is trying to reveal.

Conclusion	liked	why?
	disliked	why?

Below let us see how an introduction and conclusion to "Catastrophe in the Cathedral" might appear if we follow the model.

Introductory Paragraph

The "Cat and the Mouse" is a five page fable collected and published by the Grimm brothers of Germany in the nineteenth century. As with all such fairy tales and fables they had been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. One picture - a line drawing - shows an evilly smiling cat proudly strutting on its hind legs. It conveys the mood of the fable accurately". Like all fables, this one carries a subtle message or moral. That message is not spelled out in words. It is subtle. It is unspoken. Readers must imagine. The Cat and Mouse was republished in the 1980's by a businessmen's magazine suggesting the relevance of "Catastrophe in the Cathedral" to modern conditions.

Concluding Paragraph

The best aspect of the "Cat and the Mouse" is the hidden or deeper meaning. The fable is not merely about a cat and a mouse. It refers to what can happen in any arrangement where one partner cheats on the other. It might be a marriage, a company partnership or two friends who embark on a joint project. From the very beginning the cat represents a con artist. For this reason the fable may be more meaningful for adults than children. This brings out its weakness. Small children might even feel that the tale seems unreal. What mouse would be so stupid as to form a living arrangement with a cat? Such naivete a child might feel, gave the fable a kind of unreality, even ridiculous. Young modern fold will likely exclaim "Get real!" They may also not catch the irony that the con artist employed the cathedral and religion to cover the catastrophe he intended to engineer.

This chapter has looked at structure which in this researcher's opinion is not an enemy to producing successful writers as Graves (1983, 185-193)

would have us believe. Structure assists children in gaining control of their writing; they are then not afraid to challenge or ask questions about essential information. The important fact about structure is that neither teacher nor child is afraid of the other. Structure gives the child confidence. Children know how to begin and where to begin. No one sits around saying "I do not know how to start." Repeatedly observers of BSS classrooms have commented upon the quick way in which every child in the class puts pen to paper. The chapter has also sought to demonstrate two major structures or structural blueprints, the first leading to a library report or descriptive piece added to, and adjusted to produce an essay or extended description. The second structure provides narrative summaries added and adjusted, to create critiques and the writing of the child's own short narrative story.

Furthermore, the chapter stresses three aspects which become crucial in introducing children to structure. The first is that the BSS system moves from the whole to the component parts because children are interested in the whole. Some methods say begin with sentences, move to paragraphs and some day, possible three years from now, you might write a story. No! in BSS beginning right in grade one the child writes the full story. Introduced to paragraphs in grade two, the full story becomes fitted into three of them. Children have little interest in writing original sentences but become excited about original stories. Of course the teacher must improve sentences but keep the children focused on the whole narrative. Secondly, children must write everyday and teachers cannot say they have no time because there are so many other things to do. That raises the third point. Write about those other things you have to do. Let us postulate the most ridiculous of circumstances: The principal declares the whole school will do nothing for a whole week except concentrate upon the environmental concerns. The BSS class will

discuss and write, discuss and write. Integrate writing into all other subjects. Another week is Olympic week. While other classes draw posters of skiers, swimmers and figure skaters, the BSS class writes and draws. There can be no legitimate excuse for children not to write everyday in all subject areas and within the same structure whether on the "Historical Development of the Olympic Movement" (an essay) or on a favourite hockey player, (descriptive composition) or on "The Luge", as a library report. Focus on the Whole. Promote a structure. Practice daily is what BSS promotes. While there is no mistaking the situation: the teacher is the person in charge of the classroom organization, teachers should remain sensitive to children while they evolve in working from the larger framework to the component parts. This sensitivity involves the style of the author evolving out of structure.

William Blake (1818) wrote:

> **The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this: That the more distinct, sharp and wirey the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art... Leave out this line and you leave out life itself; all is chaos again.**

It is the belief in Blended Structure and Style that structure is taught and imagination is triggered. While this chapter examined the BSS concept of structure, the concept of style follows in Chapter IV - Teaching Writing Techniques. A programme of writing instruction which moves from the larger framework - the composition - to its component parts.

Chapter IV

STYLE: TEACHING WRITING TECHNIQUES

The capacity to be moved by a work of art is a natural human gift. There is wide variation in what moves different people and in the ability to articulate what is felt and known. But the capacity itself is a common possession. In childhood, participation involves taking part in an exercise which is rarely questioned, young children chant the rhyme, dance to the music, laugh at the colours. Later, as reflective powers develop, participation is more complex, and so more difficult to handle in the classroom - the only place where many meet creativity.

Reader and writer (author-artist) can therefore meet from the very beginning on a common ground - the ground of a shared language. Drawing on all the resources of a shared language, you do not invent new ones, but bring to light possibilities within the shared system. In structure and style - the organization of patterns is already there. Clearly the artist-author arrives at something which is the result of deliberate attentiveness in attempts to articulate common human experiences, the felt knowledge of being alive. After locating the material and developing a structure it must be presented in a style which draws attention and entraps the reader.

While there are many styles, the following represent the stylistic techniques which are woven throughout the Structure and Style programme. The styles are each taught and presented based on the classroom writing of the time. They are presented in four stages for teacher use and presentation as follows:

Stylistic Techniques

I. Dress-Up

1. who/which
2. "ly" word
3. because clause
4. strong verb
5. quality adjective
6. when, while, etc.

Minimum Rule: Each one in every paragraph.

II. Sentence Openers

1. subject
2. prepositional
3. "ly"
4. "ing" ,
5. clausal ,
6. vss

Minimum Rule: Each one in every paragraph.

III. Decorations

7. question
8. conversation
9. 3 sss
10. dramatic opening-closing
11. simile-metaphor
12. alliteration

Minimum Rule: One per paragraph, Four per story.

IV. Triple Extensions

1. word repetition
2. phrase and clausal repetition
3. repeating "ings" consecutive or spaced
4. repeating "lys" consecutive or spaced
5. repeating adjectives - nouns
6. repeating verbs, consecutive or spaced.

Minimum Rule: One different style per paragraph.

Certain structures have been stressed in this method of teaching and learning how to write. Regardless of which structures are being stressed

paragraphs are part of all of them. In approaching style, the teacher concentrates upon improving the paragraph by insisting upon the inclusion of the six elements classed as dress-up. The writer is dressing up the bare bones of his paragraph. For example, examine the two paragraphs below:

Bare Bones Paragraph

The boy ran across the road to his school on the far side. He saw the school was on fire. He ran to a telephone and called emergency. Soon the great red trucks came.

Dress-up

Dressed Paragraph

The boy raced speedily across the road which stretched between himself and his school. He saw instantly that the school had caught fire because smoke was pouring from the windows. He hurried to a dilapidated telephone when he collected his wits and nervously called the emergency number. Soon the blaring and glowing fire trucks screetched along the avenue.

It should be noted that many verbs have been strengthened (ran, raced), (was, had caught), (ran, hurried) and (came, screetched). Furthermore the addition of which, because and when clauses has forced the writer to include more details which makes the story more exciting, more presentable and more stylish. In addition the verbs have been further strengthened by the "ly" words or adverbs such as speedily, instantly, nervously. Finally the writer has added three quality adjectives - dilapidated, blaring and glowing. Two points

should be noted here. First with senior students some dispute may arise over what are quality adjectives and strong verbs. Two rules will assist the teacher. Insist upon double adjectives such as "blaring and glowing" in the above. That forms a signal from the student to the teacher which says, "This is my quality adjective". The same problem arises with verbs. Normally consider any verb strong, as long as the verb "to be" does not stand alone. In the bare bones paragraph above the writer says, "The school was on fire". That is a weak verb. It can be changed in a number of ways "was engulfed in fire", "had caught fire" or "clearly was on fire". The teacher might lay down a rule to avoid the verb "to be" but if used, add an adverb to strengthen it. However teachers should work towards the six dress up points being included in every paragraph their students write. While primary and senior students are both taught these six basic elements of dress-up, pacing will change according to age and grade level. In grade one a teacher may work with the class for six months on dress-up introducing one stylistic element at a time until the majority of the class become comfortable with all six of them. One grade six teacher introduced all six points during one lesson and one week later - writing every day - the majority of the class were using them comfortably. Dress-up generates enthusiasm. Even the slowest student who has only learned to use a few of the dress-up points sees instantly that his/her writing has improved. High school students who claim they never before knew how to improve their writing, possibly for the first time see the improvement before their eyes. Few teachers can help being struck by the enthusiasm and satisfaction which these simple strategies generate among writers.

Once a class has mastered dress-up, the teacher should move on to variety in sentence openers. Analysis of student's writing will demonstrate that they use subject openers almost exclusively. The dressed paragraph

above forms an excellent example. Every sentence begins with the subject. Working on each sentence opener in turn, ultimately the teacher should be able to encourage students to produce paragraphs like the following:

	*Sentence Openers
The boy raced speedily across the road which stretched between himself and his school. Instantly he saw that the building had caught fire because smoke was pouring from the windows. Since the boy had become breathless, he stood still. Panicking for a moment, he hurried to a dilapidated telephone when he had collected his wits and nervously called the emergency number. It rang and rang. Ultimately he heard a voice. In a flash the blaring and glowing fire trucks screetched along the avenue.	**1. subject** **3. "ly"** **5. clausal ,** **4. "ing" ,** **6. vss, 3. "ly"** **2. prep.**

Note again that by insisting upon all six sentence openers, the writer has been compelled to develop his theme more fully. This becomes an extra advantage because the original paragraph was not only bare bones without style, it was also bare bones in content. Readers should note carefully how style continues to push and improve content. The thrust of teacher editing has always been to help writers express better what they had to say. The teaching of style aims at a similar goal. Furthermore by this stage, the teacher needs to mount a wall chart, or tape a small one to each student's desk on in senior high/university print out on index cards, the elements of style which every paragraph must exhibit. At this stage each paragraph should demonstrate the six-point dress-up and six sentence openers. As the style kit increases new elements are added to it.

*[Reducing the complexity of English sentences to six types greatly assist English Second Language students to write fairly quickly. They can be shown that the basic sentence follows the pattern subject-verb-object. Use different openers to provide variety or these same openers can also be tagged on the end of the basic sentence.]

Once the teacher has coached the class to this level, he/she should begin on decorations. This introduces a new idea. The rule so far has been that every paragraph should contain all six dress-up and all six sentence openers. For decorations only one should be required. The writer may choose any one of the six decorations to improve his paragraph. However in order to make sure that writers' learns to use all of them, initially request that they all should be employed. If this is not the procedure many students will learn one decorative technique and thereafter employ it exclusively. Ideally in a multi-paragraph composition a writer should employ a different decoration in each paragraph, a simile in the first paragraph, alliteration in the second and conversation in the third. Until students have mastered them all, insist upon them all. The same paragraph is shown below, but this time possessing examples of all six decorations.

	Decorations
Surely his eyes deceived him. The boy raced speedily across the road which stretched between himself and his school. Instantly he saw that the building had caught fire because smoke was pouring from the windows. Since the boy had become breathless, he stood still silently disgusted and dismally dismayed by the scene. Panicking for a moment, he hurried to a dilapidated telephone when he had collected his wits, and nervously called the emergency number. It rang and rang. He stamped impatiently. He swore. Ultimately he heard a voice and without waiting to say "Hello" he screamed, "The Pine Crescent School is burning. Can you get here quickly?" In a flash the blaring and glowing fire trucks screetched along the avenue, vehicles from inter-stellar space which trembled and shuddered like quivering chameleons. He felt relieved.	**dramatic opening** **double alliteration** **3sss [4:3:2]** **conversation question** **metaphor** **simile** **dramatic closing**

Most of the decorations are obvious literary devices. Two may however require explanation. The dramatic opening refers to a short sentence defined as one with five words or less which comes before the topic. The dramatic closing refers to a similarly short sentence which follows the clincher. In BSS this becomes the single exception to the rule that the topic always comes first and the clincher last in the paragraph. The second less common device involves the three short staccato sentences represented by 3sss and framed in certain patterns [4:3:2] which means a sentence of four words, followed by one with three and ending with a two-word sentence. Since some decorations such as similes and alliteration come easy to writers and some give more difficulty - 3ss and metaphors - teachers usually insist on all decorations in paragraphs until a degree of mastery has been achieved. Thereafter permit only one in each paragraph and a variety with a multi-paragraph composition. Add decorations to the style kit.

Finally the teacher introduces triple extensions. The procedure is much the same as for decorations. Encourage a number of them to achieve familiarity and ultimately limit to one in each paragraph. Note that triple extensions merely refers to employing three where formerly one used one. Writers have for some time written "which" clauses with ease. Instead of one, writers now triple them as in the selection below

	Triple Extension
Surely his eyes deceived him. The boy raced speedily across the road which seemed endless, which burned beneath his feet and which stretched between himself and his school. Instantly, unbelievably and despairingly he saw that the building had caught fire because smoke was puffing, pouring and belching from the windows. Since the boy had become breathless, he stood still silently disgusted and dismally dismayed by the scene. Panicking for a moment, he hurried	**3 which clauses** **3 "lys"** **3 "ings"**

to a decapitated, abused and neglected telephone when he had collected his wits and nervously — **3 adjectives**

called the emergency number. It rang and rang. He stamped impatiently. He swore. Ultimately he heard a voice and without waiting to say "hello" he screamed, "The Pine Crescent School is burning. Can you get here quickly? In a flash, among the traffic and apparently from nowhere, the blaring and glowing fire trucks screetched along the avenue, vehicles from inter-stellar space which trembled and shuddered like quivering chameleons. He felt relieved. — **3 phrases**

There is nothing new in extensions but merely tripling devices already learned and being regularly employed. As a consequence teachers of grades five, six and up have frequently introduced them months before especially to the top writers in the class. Far back in the school year during dress-up, the top 20-50% of the class grasped the six-point dress-up long before the slower students did. In private editing conferences with the writer, or in corrections the teacher suggested to the top students to try triple which or who clauses, triple adjectives or triple verbs. Thus triples became enrichment for those prepared for them. By the end of the year in one grade six class every writer was employing at least one triple in compositions. In fact students have a tendency to "run wild" with them. They love triples. The teacher is forced ultimately to put a clamp upon excesses once students realize that their writing can become almost "baroque".

It should be obvious that the little four-sentence bare bones paragraph which had nothing to recommend it in content, has been expanded by the dictates of style to become a piece of creative writing. The requirements of style forced the writer to develop the plot and content. This has been style related to narrative fiction. Below follow four similar paragraphs on the

causes of the French Revolution (Webster, 1991). As in the narrative of the burning school, so in social studies, style in its four phases - dress-up and sentence openers, decorations and triple extensions - force writers to expand and develop the content.

The Causes of the French Revolution	Dress-up
by	
Our Class	
I. caused, multiple problems	
1. working poor, laboured	strong verbs
2. religion irrelevant	means avoiding
3. peasantry oppressed	is, are, was, were
4, middle class resentful	as single verbs
Clincher: caused	

The French Revolution was caused by multiple problems in France. The urban working poor laboured under harsh conditions. Many people who represented all classes, had lost faith in Christianity. Religion became irrelevant. The peasantry felt extremely oppressed under the feudal lords. The middle class had become resentful because it lacked political power, social influence and independence. Merchants disliked the numerous restrictions on trade which had become typical of mercantilism. The intellectuals promoted general unrest. The classes combined to cause the French Revolution, since they seethed with discontent.	topic adj. who clause vss, "ly" because cl. which clause Clincher, ad. cl.

	Sentence Openers
The French Revolution was caused by multiple problems in France. Painfully the urban working poor laboured under harsh	1. subject 3. "ly"

conditions. Among all classes people had lost	2. prep.
faith in Christianity. Religion became irrelevant.	6. vss
The peasantry felt extremely oppressed under	l. subject
the feudal lords. Leading the revolution, the	4. "ing"
middle class had become resentful because it	
lacked political power, social influence and	
independence. Merchants disliked the numerous	l. subject
restrictions on trade which had become typical of	
mercantilism. Providing the inspiration, the	4. "ing"
intellectuals promoted general unrest. Since	5. clausal
all classes seethed with discontent, they combined	
to cause the French Revolution.	

	Decorations
It created tumult. The French Revolution	dramatic opening
was caused by multiple problems in France.	
Painfully the urban working poor laboured under	
harsh conditions. Among all classes people had	
lost faith in Christianity. Religion became irrelevant.	
"Like feudal lords, the bishops oppress us!" the	conversation
people shouted. "When will it end?" The	question
peasantry felt extremely oppressed under the	
feudal lords. Leading the revolution, the middle	
class had become restive, resentful and rebellious	alliteration
because it lacked political power, social	
influence and independence. Merchants disliked	
the numerous restrictions on trade which had	
become typical of mercantilism, binding commerce	
like the grip of an octopus. Providing the inspiration,	simile
the intellectuals promoted general unrest and	
fanned the flames of revolt. The middle class	metaphor
debated. The merchants argued. Workers	
groaned. Since all classes seethed with discontent,	3sss [4:3:2]
they combined to cause the French Revolution.	
Chaos followed.	dramatic closing

	Triple Extensions
It created tumult. The French Revolution	
was caused by multiple problems in France.	
Oppressively, doggedly and painfully the urban	3 "ly" openers
working poor laboured under harsh conditions,	
during long hours and for low wages. Among	3 prep. phrases

all classes people had lost faith in Christianity. Religion became irrelevant. "Like feudal lords, the bishops oppress us!" the people shouted. "When will it end?" The peasantry felt extremely oppressed, continually harassed and overly taxed	3 verbs and "lys"
under the feudal lords who enjoyed many privileges, who exercised little social responsibility	3 who clauses
but who resented the absolutism of the monarchy. Leading the revolution, the middle class had become restive, resentful and rebellious because it lacked political power, social influence and independence. Merchants disliked the numerous, delaying and choking restrictions on trade which	3 adjectives
had become typical of mercantilism, binding commerce like the grip of an octopus. Providing the inspiration, creating the ideas and stirring up	3 "ing" openers
the masses, the intellectuals promoted general unrest and fanned the flames of revolt. The middle class debated. The merchants argued. Workers groaned. Since all classes seethed with discontent, seethed with intrigue and seethed	3 word repetition
with anger, they combined to cause the French Revolution. Chaos followed.	

Practising these four stages of style from dress-up, sentence openers, decorations and triple extensions over a number of compositions - story summaries, creative stories and critiques, library reports and essays - will improve the flow of your student writing as the habit becomes established. Eventually the paragraph flows or if it fails to, you have a stylistic rule to apply which will make it do so. Mastery includes a satisfactory feeling of accomplishment. Continue to practice. Variety will undoubtedly improve style and especially the flow of writing Pacing depends on the teacher, grade level and his/her individual students but this researcher feels it is best to take small steps to success.

Writing has become important as a survival skill for the next century and a therapy. J. B. Webster (1990) writing in the Blended Sound-Sight Newsletter states:

> **In the 1960's and seventies writing skills were neglected in the interest of personality development, conversation and emotional expression. Frequently emphasis focused upon visual aids and discussion sometimes called rapping. Reacting to the Canadian guru, Marshall McLuhan, that generation claimed that television would increasingly bring us into a new age of the face-to-face global village. Writing was thought no longer important. In the eighties business administration and adaptation of Japanese methods became the criteria for successful competition. Suddenly we were struck by the fax revolution. Writing was again in fashion.(p. 4)**

Writing has been well known as a theraputic exercise. Psychologists and psychiatrists have long used their clients to write about their feelings, about their problems and about their personal histories. Since every individual has feelings, problems and a history it follows that writing is good for all. If teenagers wrote more about these things, they might develop more adequate and acceptable means of relieving tension than is common among them. Gently teachers can foster and offer opportunities for such "letting off" of the steam of pent up teen emotions. Whether teachers believe or do not believe that this forms part of their role, giving teenagers the skill and confidence to write and opening up to them the joy of writing will suffice. They will find their own way. Thinking back to the student who wrote about his part in reporting a fictitious school fire; can we know whether his/her paragraph began as a fantasy within them, of desiring to do good and achieve a little hero-status in his/her own eyes? As the bare bones paragraph grew and blossomed, so did his/her ego, self-image and pride. Let the world believe their pride stemmed strictly from their ability in writing because

longing for status of a hero is not an emotion one exposes to all the world. Secretly within that teenage writer the joy arose from an elaboration of his/her fantasy. We call it or mis-call it, imagination. Therefore teachers think of writing not only as preparation for future jobs but also as a therapy open and free to all.

Writing is a process. In Blended Structure and Style you begin with a blueprint, - an outline. You write a first draft. You check the draft to ensure the requirements for quotations have been met, that the stipulated number of short sentences have been employed, and that overworked words have been replaced with appropriate synonyms. You write the second draft. You check again to be certain that the introduction actually raises the questions you have answered, and that the conclusion follows a recommended model. Have various categories of "lead-ins" been used to introduce quotations? Have different types of clinchers and starters been employed? You then write the third draft. With a dictionary check dubious spellings. With a thesaurus continue the search for suitable synonyms. Analyze each paragraph to ensure that it contains at least one very long and one very short sentence. Does it include a complex sentence with a subordinate clause beginning with "while", "where", "which", "because" or "as"? Now write the fourth, and final draft paying particular attention to an attractive presentation.

Let us, for example, look at the development of style for a grade employing all four stages and using Grimm's Fairy Tale - "The Cat and the Mouse" (see Appendix B). We have examined style in relation to single-paragraph narratives and in history. In what follows it will be examined in relationship to summaries for multi-paragraph narrative stories. Readers will recognize this same tale had been employed in an earlier chapter where the theme revolved around structure. Using this same story the discussion

will focus on classroom procedures taking into account structure and style. Further the style syllabus has been discussed in detail as far as its first three sections. In what follows emphasis will be placed upon the triple extensions as they apply to the narrative of "The Cat and the Mouse" (Webster, 1991).

Step One - Classroom Discussion and Procedure

Following the reading of the story the teacher and class should develop the following points for further clarification and discussion:

Meaning and Message

Cat and Mouse Corporation: Corporate Greed
Marriage: saving wife . spend thrift male
Con Man: swindles peopie's savings

Symbolism

The Church: safety, murder

Synonyms

fraudulent cat	pitiful mouse
furry feline	eager rodent
cagey he-animal	naive and timid creature
crafty felon	hard-working partner
male couch potato	unsuspecting victim

Teach one writing skill

Insist they use it in every paragraph they write thereafter.

Step Two - Build a class outline on the board or overhead.

Following the Ingham Narrative Chart but using senior terminology we would go over the structures of the story and build a class outline together on the chalkboard or overhead as shown below.

Ingham Chart (1972, 135)

Title	The Cat-Mouse
by	by

Name

I. Who - is in the story?

Where - do they live?

- do they go?

[or]

Characters
Setting

II. What - do they look like?

- do they say?

- happens?

[or]

Plot

Conflict

III. Story Sequence

problem or surprise

[or]

Climax

solve the problem

[or]

Theme

Clincher: Repeat the title

Our Class

I. Cat-Mouse

1. partnership
2. store lard
3. church
4. lived in harmony

II. Cat's deception

1. god father to newborns
2. Top-off, Half-gone, All-gone
3. mouse insecure
4. cat, cagey character

III. Proceed to cathedral

1. pot-empty
2. cat screams cheat
3. mouse understands
4. cat swallows mouse

Clincher repeats title

Step Three - Students copy the outlines into their books.

After students had copied the outline into their books the teacher would go over those stylistic techniques which had been taught in class and required in compositions. Review! Reminders! Remember! For a spark of review right now, note the sentence openers in the next paragraph.

In the beginning (prepositional openers) the rule appears restrictive. Since the rule is new to you, (clausal opener) mastery - as in all other matters of style - requires repeated repetition. Practising ("ing" opener) over a number of stories the flow of your writing will improve as the habit becomes established. Eventually ("ly" opener) the paragraph flows or if it fails to, you have a stylistic rule to apply which will make it do so. Mastery (subject opener) includes a satisfactory feeling of accomplishment. Continue to practice (very short sentence). Variety will undoubtedly improve style and especially the flow of writing.

Step Four - Write Stories

Students would then set to work on creating their own stories from the outline putting to use all the stylistic techniques developed in the class writing programme to date. The following is an example of a completed story written by Geraldine Farris (Webster, 1991). The reader should note that it conforms to the regulations of the style syllabus. It employs all six dress-up items, all sentence openers and contains at least one decoration and one triple extension in each paragraph. The sentence openers have been designated by number: 1. subject, 2. prepositional, 3. "ly", 4. "ing", 5. clausal, and 6. vss, very short sentence.

June, 1991 — The Triumph of the Feline Felon
by
Geraldine Farris

Openers		Dress-Up	Decorations & Triple Ext'ns.
3	Slyly the crafty cat hinted to the tiny mouse that		
6	they might form a partnership and live together. The		
5	mouse agreed. When they took counsel, it was decided	when	
6	to store a pot of lard for the season of hunger. They		
7	pondered. Where should the larder be located? What	where/what	
	better storehouse than the church. So it was decreed.		
	In the afternoon and like lovers they carefully stowed	"ly"	simile
	the precious pot under the altar. Lard awaited in the		3sss [5:4:3]
3,4	larder. Surely it was safe. It was secure. Living together		
	in harmony, the hard-working rodent performed most	'"ing"	
	of the labour while the furry feline stretched, yawned		while clause
1	and preened before the hearth. The lounging male couch		quality adj.
	potato professed great affection for what he referred to as		what clause
	" the little lady ".		
6,1	The feline was a fraud. He personified the great		dr. opening
	deceiver in cat hair whose heart had been fashioned in		whose cl.
4	Hades. Lying boldly upon different occasions, he	"ly"	
	persuaded the naive little rodent that he had been		
	invited as godfather because of the celebrated arrival of	because	
2	three newborns in the family. Upon each occasion he		
	stealthily crept into the church and savoured the lard	"ly"	
6	until the pot had been drained. Lies multiplied. Top-		strong vb.
	off became godchild number one. Half-gone was number		3sss [5:4:3]
5	two. All-gone became three. Since the wee "little lady"	since	
	felt insecure and feared the loneliness of the dismal, dark		quality adj.
	and dreary winter, she willed herself into believing her	ing	
1	partner. She willfully overlooked what had become	"ly"	what clause
3	tragically obvious. Clearly the cat was a cagey character,		alliteration
6	the master of deception. The mouse had been cheated.		dr. closing
5	As the season of hunger drew near, the reluctant		quality adj.
	Tom and eager rodent proceeded to the cathedral store-		
6,1	house. The pot stood empty. Truth slowly dawned on	"ly"	
8	the no-longer trusting mouse who cried out, "You have	who	
	cheated me, cheated us and worst of all have cheated		word repetition
4,8	yourself." Lashing out angrily she shouted. "You are a		
1	fraud." The poor mouse wailed in disdain, despair ,		alliteration
8,2	and disbelief. "You are crafty." With paws crossed		
8,4	upon her head, she shook in grief. "Cat slime!" Lying	strong verb	
	paralyzed on the floor, the mouse sobbed convulsively.		
1	Roused against the fraudulent cat, the wee creature	quality adj.	
8	shouted. "I understand Top-off. I understand Half-		word rept.
1	gone. I understand All-gone." Like many of his	like	simile
2	gender, the he-animal was silent. With one mighty		
	leap the feral feline sprang from the altar. Gulp! the		3sss [5:4:3]
	rodent went in. Gulp! she went down. Gulp! he belched.		word rept.
3	Slowly and wickedly a terrifying grin spread across the	quality adj.	
	face of the feline felon as he savoured his triumph while		
	meditating upon who might be his next partner and		Clincher: reflects title
	"little lady."		

Once students have mastered the elements of dress up, the six types of sentence openers in every paragraph to achieve writing flow and variety, they are ready to attempt more sophisticated style in their paragraphs. In each paragraph writers should seek to include one of the following, triple extensions. Employ one type in the first paragraph, employ another in the second, and employ yet another in the third and so forth. Hence no triple (or

decoration for that matter) should ever be used more than once in an essay. Furthermore writers should place the appropriate Arabic numeral in the left hand margin to indicate which style has been attempted as:

VI **Deceiving, disparaging and disrespecting one's mate surely rank as the worst of marital crimes.**

Writers will recognize that the first four of the triple extensions have been previously introduced. The first three relate to short sentences. Every paragraph must contain either a very short sentence (vss) or one of the styles numbered I to III. Since sentence styles I to III may only be employed once in an essay, all other paragraphs must contain at least one vss. This has been standard practice. Old rules are not being changed - those regarding short sentences and sentence openers remain the same but new rules are being added which require writers to practice a variety of triple styles.

Categories and Examples of Triple Extensions: The Cat and Mouse

I. 3sss [a:a:a]

He leaped upon her. She was silently sacrificed. The altar turned crimson. [4:4:4]

Suddenly, he leaped. Silently, she disappeared. Slowly, he grinned. [3:3:3]

II. 3sss [a:b:c]

He sprang upon her. She died wordlessly. He smirked. [4:3:2]

III. Dramatic Opening-Closing

The feline was a fraud. He personified the great deceiver in cat hair whose heart had been fashioned in Hades.

- paragraph details -

Clearly the cat was a cagey character, the master of deception. The mouse had been cheated.

IV. Word Repetition

Greed initially consumed him, eventually consumed their savings and finally consumed her. (If this was a final clincher, the title might be "Greed".)

Gulp! he salivated. Gulp! she disappeared. Gulp! he belched.

The he-animal undermined his mate's self-image, undermined her independence and undermined her will to resist.

The cat preached the oneness of partnership but pursued his selfish aims, preached the importance of trust yet lied repeatedly and preached the sacredness of life while planning the murder of his mate. (If this was a clincher, the title might be "The Preacher".)

V. Phrase and Clausal Repetition

Callously indifferent, the cat's behaviour resulted in continuous damage to her self-image, in regular undermining of her independence and in repeated humiliation of her feminine nature.

The deceitful cat who planned well in advance, who lacked morals of any kind and who seized every selfish opportunity, drew up the terms of the partnership.

VI. Repeating "ings", Consecutive or Spaced

Deceiving, disparaging and disrespecting one's mate surely rank as the worst of martial crimes.

Initially the cat had been deceiving in his plans, disparaging of his partner and finally brutalizing in his neglect of his mate.

VII. Repeating "lys", Consecutive or Spaced

The homemaker strongly, repeatedly and consistently nagged her mate to shoulder an equal share of the routine household chores.

His scheme was carefully designed, minutely planned and precisely executed.

Theoretically there was equality within the partnership but practically the talented mouse was continuously prevented from reaching her potential while regularly, consistently and positively discouraged from achieving self-respect.

VIII. Repeating Nouns and Adjectives, Consecutive and Spaced (Nouns underlined, adjectives brackets [ ])

Hence the personality of the mouse became disunited, disordered and disoriented before the [tough],[hardened] and [street-wise] attitude of the master cat.

The master cat carried male dominance to its [logical] end, [final] conclusion and [ultimate] extreme by murdering the mouse on the altar of his ego.

The new home became the centre of her interests, the nucleus of her femininity and the focus of her daily routine.

While the mouse was grateful for, sensitive to and appreciative of the coziness and warmth of a home, to the Tom the alliance merely provided a shelter, a roof and a temporary place to hand his hat.

IX. Repeating Verbs, Consecutive. (Verbs Underlined)

His scheme was designed, planned and executed with crafty care and cunning.

Re-settling with the cat meant abandoning the traditional home where her ancestry had been born and brought up, and had lived and died.

X. Repeating Verbs, Spaced

His callousness continually pervaded the home, totally dominated their relationship and frequently disturbed the peace.

XI. Similes [like, as] and Metaphors [without them]

The cat was like a vulture but more deceitful,
like a thief but more brazen.

The cat was a vulture but more deceitful, a
thief yet more brazen and a con-artist while
less subtle.

XII. Alliteration

The shiftless, chauvinist shyster brought tumult,
turmoil and turbulence to the mouse in life and,
disaster, disgrace and dishonour in her death.

The simple even stupid mouse will be remembered
with disapproval and disgust dying in disgrace and
dishonour.

It is in the use of style that author and artist truly meet. The stylistic techniques presented in this chapter are woven throughout the Structure and Style syllabus like threads of gold through a tapestry. Structure is style. Style is structure. The Blended Structure and Style sets forth a simple progression of stylistic elements which the teacher can introduce at any point in the writing programme. The structure may be narrative stories following the sequence model. The teacher might only then begin dress-up in style. Other teachers might by that time have completed dress-up and sentence openers and begun to introduce decorations. Webster (1988) sets down a suggested time-table for introducing new structures. He argues that from grade four and upward, one month spent on one structure is probably enough. Whether the whole class has mastered it or not, he recommends that the teacher move on. Students react differently to the various structures, liking one and not being too fond of another. Thus the timetable for structure appears rigid as is any strategy until you are familiar with it. The timetable for style on the

other hand, he leaves fluid to be determined by the teacher and student authors. Very good writing results from dress-up and sentence openers alone. Where classroom authors show mastery of the six openers stressed by BSS, teachers might desire to introduce some of the others. For example the "ed" opener as in "Satisfied with his progress, the young man doubled his efforts in writing." The philosophy and beliefs of a teacher implementing this syllabus of structure and style follows as the subject of this study, whose design and implementation are reported in Chapter V.

Chapter V

Design and Implementation of the Study

Due to the fact that no formal research has been conducted on the Blended Structure and Style programme it was chosen as the language learning programme to study. The following three research questions which were stated on page 10 were designed as an over-all guide to the study: 1) Does the teacher see the connection of reading tied into a good writing programme? 2) Does the teacher feel that the method of Blended Structure and Style is an effective Literature-Based programme which can be implemented in the language learning programme of the elementary school? and 3) Does the teacher indulge in critical reflection and, if so, does critical reflection affect subsequent instruction?

Site and Participant Selection

During the summer of July, 1991 I began to search for a setting in which to conduct my graduate research in written communication. A number of teachers were considered in the search for the appropriate research site and participant. The classrooms had been suggested by a university professor when I requested a list of teachers who might be considering using the Blended Structure and Style programme. Following initial contact with these teachers one was chosen as the participant to study and her classroom became the research setting. Permission was sought and granted. The teacher selected had taken the Blended Structure and Style summer session and was very anxious to take part in the study. The one disadvantage to the researcher was the distance from the university to the research setting. The teacher's school was located in an isolated area in Northern Alberta.

As a location for an intensive study, the social institution of the school did not represent a threatening or overly sensitive situation for the

researcher. Twelve years of experience as a student as well as over thirty years in teaching/administrative situations had furnished me with the confidence to be both unobtrusive and non-threatened within its confines.

The decision was made before the study began for me not to assume any false or secretive role but to develop my status openly. The staff of the school were aware of the research relationship between the researcher and the teacher, but the students were only made aware that the researcher was "from the University of Alberta".

The location of the school and its community was another matter. When the researcher met the teacher as one of his students in his summer class the matter of community never came up and the researcher assumed that the community was located very far into the Northern area of the province. Today it is one of the last regions in the country where forested Crown lands are still offered to settlers for agricultural expansion. This northern settlement, stalled for nearly a century until a rail link was built, sits in boreal forest that has now given way to farmland. As I travelled along the roadway, by the side of the road, rolling sandhills and stands of scrub had disappeared into a patchwork of fields. To the south the great hills stood guard over the plain, keeping the outside world firmly at bay. The community is perched on the far fringes of the continent's arable land, to the west of Wood Buffalo National Park.

For all its romance, northern Alberta remains an unlikely promised land. Like other boreal regions, it endures bitter cold in winter and legions of mosquitoes in summer, and this researcher often wondered how recent settlers fared. Did most struggle for a season or two before drifting back south, discouraged and beaten? Or had they stuck it out, clearing the land and reaping the rewards of the labour? Most of all, I wondered whether they had

discovered the simpler life we once contemplated. These questions arose after my first visit to the community.

Of the regions residents, most are members of a traditional Protestant sect that originated in the Netherlands during the Reformation. A people opposed to secular authority, they have long been fond of agricultural frontiers. The majority of the residents speak in Plattdeutsch, a dialect common to the residents, while the majority are also able to speak English and everyone spoke to the researcher in English. Everytime the researcher attended church in the community the entire service was in English although the researcher was informed that at certain of the churches around the service would be in Plattdeutsch.

Not having hotel accommodation, as no hotel existed, the researcher stayed in the home of the school principal. The principal informed the researcher that for the entire school population English is a second language.

Increasingly the outside world is drawing closer. In 1968, electricity arrived in the area about the same time the telephone arrived into the area. Many of the residents have to work in the logging camps during the winter in order to make ends meet. They refer to this as "going to the bush" and on my first visit I was quite worried when I heard one teacher remark, "Well I lost two more kids in the bush this morning". When families do go "to the bush" they go as an entire family which makes the school population vary considerably during the winter months. When I enquired from John, upon his return in the spring, how he managed his schooling when "in the bush"? I was informed that he had correspondence lessons. One of the parents summed it up very well when he stated, "Homesteading is like a handicraft. You make it, and then you have it." The researcher spent many fond hours

swapping tales with the locals as the location reminded the researcher of many wonderful hours spent as a youth on his Uncles' farm.

Based on the assumptions of the qualitative research, human actions have more meaning than just the concrete facts of who, what, where and when, observable by an outsider. Similarly, the researcher must make sure that the facts are interpreted within the context in which they were gathered by systematically empathizing with the participant.

The advantage of this site was that researchers from the university rarely conduct studies in such Northern areas and the researcher felt it would be a unique opportunity to conduct the study there. The teacher selected was teaching at the upper elementary level. With regards to finding a suitable key informant, or teacher, the only criteria were that on first impression, the teacher appeared to be able to reflect on his/her teaching and articulate his/her philosophy with a considerable amount of confidence and ease and that the teacher was willing to commit a great deal of time over and above her classroom teaching time to the study. This proved to be crucial to the study and this particular teacher, Pat, was reflective and articulate as well as very generous with her time for the purposes of the research.

The Subject - Pat

Pat had attended a summer course in Grouard, Alberta. She had attended the course of her own free will on the recommendation of another teacher she had worked with in previous years. Pat had taught for five years in her school system. Although she had always taught at the upper elementary, Pat had changed schools and grades several times. In addition, she had attempted to explore and develop different curricular areas within her teaching. For the past two years Pat's focus had been on the language learning area, in particular the area of writing, as she attempted to develop an

approach to the language learning that was compatible with her philosophy and beliefs. In this process, the work of Dr. J. B. Webster and Mrs. A. G. Ingham served as constant references for Pat. At the point of commencement of the research Pat was continuing to develop her own language learning programme in a new school, Rolling Hills, and was beginning an implementation of Dr. J. B. Webster's programme. Rolling Hills is an isolated school in Northern Alberta. The school is rather small with a teaching staff of seven and about one hundred students from K to Grade Six.

Pat would be implementing the programme with a group of Grade Four children in her classroom at Rolling Hills where she was teaching. With the researcher outlining his thoughts for such a research study, Pat asked if she might be involved in such a study. After many hours of discussion both the teacher and researcher agreed. The study focus would be on the teacher's articulation of the philosophy and beliefs that manifested themselves in implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme of written communication. Harootunian (1980) suggests that "researchers' attentions should turn to the subjectively reasonable beliefs that teachers hold. An examination of these beliefs and study of evidence bearing upon them would become the initiating focus" (267). This position is supported by Nespor (1984) who conducted a major review of the studies into the beliefs which teachers hold about a wide variety of teaching contexts and variables from curriculum to community influences. An important conclusion of this review was that:

> **"...theories of teaching, products of experience and accommodation to the practical problems of the classroom act as strong inertial forces which must be well understood if programs of reform and change in teaching practice are to be effectively implemented" (p. 3).**

In the process, the research touched on how that teacher diagnosed needs, planned for learning, assessed student progress, and reported to parents and administrators. The challenge which faced the researcher was to develop a method of determining what a teacher believes about some particular aspect of curricular practice, in this study implementing a programme of teaching writing, and then to ascertain the teacher's perceptions of how these beliefs affect student learning.

Design Elaboration

The researcher conducted unstructured and structured interviews with the teacher and observed in the language learning of the classroom. Data collection took place over a six month period and included weekly interviews and telephone conversations as well as classroom observation notes, journal writing, audio-tapes, all pertaining to the language learning programme in writing of this classroom teacher and her students. All interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed for the purposes of analysis. Observations of the language learning programme in writing were recorded in the form of field notes, handwritten while observing. The teacher shared her journal. Requested copies of selected documents were generously supplied by the teacher and have been kept confidential as to name and place.

While collaboration went on during the entire study, the final analysis occurred following data collection and took the form of a qualitative description of the programme components illustrating the teacher's expressed philosophy and beliefs underlying their implementation.

The researcher selected an action research design to observe one teacher using the Blended Structure and Style approach to teaching written communication. Before the study began the researcher commenced studying the various principles and procedures of both ethnography and action

research, through reading, talking to other researchers, university course work, and trying to prepare himself for the work which lay ahead. I was well aware of the pitfalls of what Ray Rist (1980) calls "blitzkrieg ethnography" - the tendency for researchers to rush into schools, collect their information, and hurriedly leave. As a result, long before the study began, I read accounts of ethnographical field work (Spradley, 1980); action-research (Carson & Couture, 1988); completed three research courses and countless readings. I also studied samples of field notes and prepared lists of questions and checklists of items that I discussed with fellow graduate students and professors including my advisor. In addition I kept in constant contact with my key informant Pat, in whose room the study would take place, to discuss with her what to expect when we began. The more I came to understand the research methodologies of action research and ethnography, the more comfortable I became with their assumptions. I found that many of the notions I held to be true about writing have counterparts in action research and it was often my understanding of the writing process that helped guide me (along with some empathetic professors) in making decisions when I was faced with methodological issues.

Like Sondra Perl (1987),I came to understand that the research,

> **like writing, is both a product and a process (Agar, 1980). While it usually results in a report or a book, it begins with a series of activities--looking, asking questions, speculating, making observations, drawing inferences And, just as the last decade of work on composition shows that we will not discover how writers write solely by analyzing their products, we assert that we will not discover how teachers teach merely by analyzing their grade books or their lesson plans. In order to discover how a process unfolds, whether it is writing or teaching, we have to observe it, and to do this we benefit when we use a method[s] that are [themselves] concerned with how things evolve.**

A second realization, which Pat and I realized, common to writing and action research is that we learn by doing. Perl writes:

> It is commonplace to say that we will never learn how to write solely by reading about it or studying what writers say about it; similarly, budding [researchers] will not learn the methods and procedures...merely by reading or studying accounts of other [researchers]. While we are not advocating the abandonment of careful study and preparation, the advice we received, which echoes again and again in the books we read and in the talks we had with different [professionals], was that we learn...by rolling up our sleeves and getting our hands dirty. In other words, there is no substitute for going into the field, collecting one's own data, learning to follow one's own hunches, and learning how to let one's own questions be one's guide.

Thirdly, a notion common to many teachers of writing is that writing leads to discovery. Perl continues:

> As writers, we do not plan ahead of time everything we will say. More often, we discover what we want to say as we go along. So, too, in [research]. We don't enter a setting deciding ahead of time what events will mean; rather, we allow the meaning to emerge from our observations and repeated reflections. While we may enter the setting with certain guiding questions, we do not impose our answers. We allow them to emerge from the the process of looking

A fourth impression from writing process research has come the idea that writing is a recursive process. Perl reports:

> When writers write, we often repeat certain patterns or routines: we literally go back to go forward. We often go back to words, we reread, we go back to the topic, or we even return to what we sense about the topic that is not yet in words. Similarly, [research] is a recursive process. Researchers return to field-notes, for rereading and study, to informants for verification and elaboration, and even more importantly to their hunches, to random thoughts that recur, to their sense of what is occurring in the field so that they can begin to discern patterns and themes. And just as in writing, when we go back to the text and let our sense of it tell us where we need or want to go next, so in ethnographic [and action research], when we return to our notes and to the classrooms themselves, our sense of what is occurring deepens and we see where next to direct our observations.

Fifthly, in the writing process approach Perl advocates:

> **Writers shape their ideas, experiences, thoughts, perceptions, and arguments in many different forms and from many different points of view. By doing so they begin to see not only how rich experience is and how they, themselves, play an active role in constructing what experiences mean. Similarly, ethnographers [and action researchers] recognize the multiplicity of views inherent in human experience. The researcher's perspective is seen as one among many--not as the one representing the truth. Rather, ethnographers [and action researchers] present a version of reality one they have lived, which represents their own biases, prejudices and preferences, one marked by the stamp of their own personalities.**

Sixth ethnography [and action research] are models which rely primarily on human perception. Perl writes:

> **What we have discovered that makes writing and ethnography [and action research] so similar, researchers tend not to discuss classrooms in terms of lesson plans or test scores; rather, we seek to bring to the surface what we sense as intangible, hidden, often overlooked in the unfolding of classroom dynamics. The reason why we have been comfortable using ethnography [action research] in our study is because our view of teaching and writing is that both are human processes that ought not be reduced to linear schemes or checklists. In this sense, writing and teaching are both seen as complex; such complex processes, in fact, that only a human being would be capable of grasping their significance. When we take this kind of approach to phenomena, we do not end up with neat research designs, clear-cut boundaries and controlled variables. But we do find ourselves involved in an enormously rich task that requires us to respond on a human level.**

Finally, agreeing with Perl who writes:

> **What we have discovered that makes writing and ethnography [action research] so similar, and what must be there for each one to flourish, is the development of trust. In classrooms, we have seen that what allows for writing that has voice is a trusting relationship among the students and between students and teachers---where students feel comfortable about taking risks. Similarly, we have come to see that**

> **ethnography [action research], like writing, offers us the opportunity to go beneath the surface and study what is most intimate in teaching, and that, too, requires the development of trust.**

In my discussions with Pat both before the study began, during the study itself and at the conclusion of the study led us both to realize that the element of 'trust' was the outstanding feature of the journey and we have become very 'close' professional colleagues who were able to study what is most intimate in teaching and our 'faith' and 'trust' developed to the point where we were able to learn and assist each other in a most professional way.

Activities which change teaching practice have personal meaning and application. The professional nature of teaching compels teachers to engage in constant inquiry, critique and reflection. It was this researchers contention that action research could help to transform teaching practice. Research questions are of interest to the teacher and the results of the research activities have personal meaning. By collaborating with resource personnel, teachers can ask questions about their own teaching and teaching situations and obtain meaningful answers which have the potential to alter individual teaching practice - a goal all teachers would be wise to embrace as a fundamental quality of their own professional ethics.

Action research is not new. Neither is it firmly established in the academic world as a universally accepted and structured field of social science research. As Albert Borgmann (1984) states:

1. **It is initiated to solve practical problems of teaching and / or school life in general.**
2. **It requires collaborative action among teachers (with or without the expertise of outsiders).**
3. **It involves educators who share a common set of ethical commitments (that is, to improve teaching and the quality of life in schools).**
4. **It is essentially emancipatory and liberating (in that the process of action research typically**

leads to the unconscious and conscious unravelling of the limits to educational practice).

Action research, as the name suggests, is directly concerned with developing a closer relationship between theory and practice. Originally it was introduced in 1944 by Kurt Lewin. The method consisted of a spiral of planning, action and reflection (Lewin, 1944). Lewin's original project placed importance on participation. The significance of the cooperative group was noted by Shumsky (1956) as he observed the critical need for developing feelings of "belongingness" and community in a modern individualistic society. Community building creates the conditions for critical thinking and cooperative action (Carson & Couture, 1988, 3). "Doing" in these terms is an acting in solidarity with others to bring about changes. Elliot and Adelman (1973, 20) are interested in the implicit theories that underlie practice. Carr (1986) and Kemmis & McTaggart (1988) view action research as an appropriate science of education. The ideal of improving education, and the quality of social life in general, through genuine democratic participation is limited by unequal power relations. These relations have developed historically and may be altered through the action research of participants.

Supporters of critically reflective action research see it as a genuinely "educative" science of education which moves participants beyond merely solving their problems-in-view. By beginning with these, and by extending the range of analysis and reflection, they may gain new insights into their own work situations and taken-for-granted assumptions. Moreover, by exposing the blocks to free and open communication, participants might be able to build a truly democratic practice. True collaboration involves a serious and sustained effort be made to develop understandings among

educators. It means the development of truly collegial relationships based upon an ethical responsibility for one another and for the children we serve.

Although the action research spiral of plan, act, observe and reflect looks very much like everyday practice, it is, in fact, quite different. Particularly, by concentration on systematic observation and reflection, taken-for-granted assumptions begin to come to view and lead to new discoveries. Because action research projects are rooted in the real concerns of the participants, they reflect a variety of interests ranging from how-to-problems to more fundamental philosophical questions. This researcher believes that teachers do have a role to play in educational research, provided they have the time and support for doing it. It is this researcher's wish that this will be the beginnings of a community of educators dedicated to a grassroots improvement of school life.

The utilization of ethnographic research tools is appropriate in research situations that are qualitative in nature; where one is seeking information about the qualities of any particular phenomena that occur within a context from which they cannot be divorced without alteration. The classroom is one such situation. Bogdan and Knopp-Biklen (1982) state:

> **"Qualitative researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context. They feel that action can best be understood when it is observed in the setting in which it occurs... . To divorce the act, word, or gesture from its context is, for the qualitative researcher, to lose sight of significance" (p. 27).**

Studying a language arts programme in action requires the researcher to deal with complex and varied social phenomena--phenomena which are inextricably imbedded in their context and which could be accessed through the use of various procedures common to ethnographic research. "Ethnography [and action research]...allows us to explore in minute and

concrete detail the highly complex series of phenomena which operate in and around the classroom" (Wilcox, 1982, 478).

Definition of Terms

Several terms are used extensively in this study and are defined in operational terms. Writing. While writing has been described in different ways: "as pre-writing, writing and rewriting; as circling out and circling back; as collecting and connecting" (Calkins, 1986, p. 17). Murray (1984) uses the terms rehearsal, drafting, revision and editing to describe the process of writing. In this study, writing is defined as "the process of using language to discover meaning in experience and to communicate it" (Murray, 1984, p. 86). Composition. In this study "composition" will be used as a general term to cover the various types of writing; summaries, short stories, descriptive pieces, literary critiques and essays. Each type of composition requires a structure which allows the writer to be a meaning-maker--whether it be writing one's own message or reconstructing another;s--based on the interaction of one's goals, prior knowledge, and text. Conference. The term conference has been described as "a scheduled one-to-one discussion between a teacher and a student concerning some aspect of the child's involvement in the writing process" (Yeske, 1984, p. 3). In this study conference includes both teacher/pupil discussion and discussion between students. Method as used in this study refers to Ingham's Blended Sound-Sight Method. Programme as used in this study refers to Webster's Blended Structure and Style Programme. Note-Outline. Refers to the structure of the format when students prepare their own meaning-making notes prior to the reshaping process. Collective Outline refers to one created by teacher and students. The teacher writes it on a board or overhead while the children suggest heading and details. It may follow from a story read, a theme in a content subject or

after the teacher has presented a lesson. Essay Outline is a plan usually constructed from two or more note-outlines and normally individually constructed. The format of all three types of outlines are similar. Instructional Writing Materials are the materials put before the class by the teacher for the purpose of instruction. Appropriate Instructional Materials are instructional materials which approximate the instructional reading level of the students to whom they are assigned as seat or independent work. For example, in a grade six class, appropriate instructional materials for some students may appear at grade three and for others at the junior-high or senior-high level. Inappropriate Instructional Materials do not approximate the instructional level of the students to whom they are assigned. Grade-level Instructional Materials refers to reading materials at the level of the grade of the class. With year six a teacher might use year six reading level materials in her oral lesson even though they were beyond the ability of a lower segment of the class. She must, therefore, spend considerable time in reading, choral reading, word analysis and meaning, to ensure that, before she begins to teach, all of the class can read and understand the literature upon which the lesson is to be built. In follow-up assignments, the teacher should employ appropriate instructional materials targeted to the various reading levels in the class. Literature-based. In this study literature-based means a classroom programme which relies on trade literature as its curricular material rather than a published series of texts that are usually accompanied by a teacher's manual and student activity books. Structure is synonymous with model. Blended Sound-Sight will refer to the general philosophy and method of learning followed by Webster, Ingham and others. Both writers insist that there is no Ingham method as distinct from a Webster programme. Between the two the stress is different but the method remains the same.

Webster's structural model for narratives which he applies at the high school level is taken directly from Ingham (1972, 139). Webster's note outlining model again from Ingham (p. 186). However where the thesis refers specifically to Webster, the phrase Blended Structure and Style (BSS) will be employed.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made at the onset of this study: (1) It was assumed that in assigning instructional materials to the students, the teacher observed in this study adjusted the materials to the specific writing needs of each student. Consequently, the writing performance of the students would be an indication of the teacher's estimate of instructional level rather than a demonstration of particular disabilities. (2) It was assumed that the teacher observed in this study viewed the writing process as one involving the fluent flow of words, and the conveyance of the literal and interpretive meanings of those words rather than something else. (3) A third assumption made was that the teacher observed in this study was familiar with the approaches of writing used in a Literature-Based approach like Blended Sound-Sight and could engage in the various cognitive activities which would allow her to meet the instructional level criterion for both literal and interpretive compositions.

METHODOLOGY

Through his study of the norms which exist in thousands of American classrooms, John Goodlad (1984) has helped the researcher understand why the teaching of writing has become so important to teachers and children throughout the country. In A Place Called School, Goodlad (1984) writes, "data ... suggest to me a picture of rather well-intentioned teachers going about their business somewhat detached from and not quite connecting with

the "lives' of their students. What their students see as primary concerns in their daily lives, teachers view as dissonance in conducting school and classroom business" (p. 80). "Classes at all levels," Goodlad observes, "tend not to be marked with exuberance, joy, laughter, abrasiveness, praise ... but by emotional neutrality," (p. 112).

Basic to this notion is the idea that teachers must extend rather than just present facts. Once children internalize concrete revision strategies, these strategies, become tools of thought for them, and they use them in easy, offhanded ways. Now they have a strategy for doing.

Qualitative research was implemented in this study which is action research designed and descriptive in nature offering suggestions for one method which teachers could use for the improvement of student writing. Demonstrating structural-models which writers can follow gives concrete suggestions about how teachers can help students improve their writing style.

It has been suggested that the communication patterns between newborn infants and mothers provide a powerful example of a natural teaching-learning interaction. The two respond to each other in such a way that only with the help of slow motion films is it possible to tell who is initiating and who is following. Roger Brown calls this responsible teaching "tracking." and it has much in common with Bruner's scaffolding (1982), Friere's dialogue (1982) and Holdaway's role-playing (1979) the mentor's activities. Each of these points of view form what is part of an emerging paradigm of literacy-learning. Basic to this paradigm is the notion that teachers must extend rather than simply teach. As Vygotsky (1978) says, "What a child can do in cooperation today, he can do alone tomorrow," (p. 101) "Internalization means that the child does not have to go about his problem any longer by overt trial and error," but as Piaget writes, "can actually

carry out trial and error in his head." (p. 215). Bruner (1966) gives a similar example of the way in which a concrete operation can provide an internalized structure. He writes that, when children use the balance scale to solve math problems, they later solve problems by visualizing the structure of serial weights in their minds. "Such internal structures," he claims "are of the essence: they are the internalized-symbolic systems by which the child represents the world." (pp. 36-37). Perl and Wilson (1986) state: "What ethnographic research does that experimental research does not do is preserve the web of factors and circumstances that make up the complicated process of language learning"(p.98). Although the concept itself is not new, action research is a term first used in the 1940"s by Kurt Lewin. It implies the application of techniques and methods of social science to immediate, practical problems of teaching, with the goals of contributing to theory and knowledge in the field of education (Kemmis, 1988). Gordon Thomas (1988, foreword) states that "...Action research can help to transform teaching practice." It goes without saying that in order to successfully implement an action research, the relationship between the teacher and the researcher has to be one of mutual respect for each other's expertise, since each person brings a different perspective to the study. Writing is thinking. For an activity so interwoven with the whole of one's mental and social life, an ethnographic action research design seemed especially appropriate as described by Fullan (1982), Fullan and Connelly (1987), Lortie (1975), and Russell (1987). As Perl and Wilson (1986) state: "A myriad of factors go into writing that only an ongoing, flexible, and pluralistic sort of research can do justice to it" (p. x).

David Hawkins (1974) writes:

> **What Dewey called 'the supremacy of method' is subtly wrong ... There are some truths that require at least two sentences. The first truth may well be that the art of inquiry is educationally more fundamental than the facts and truths established by that practice. But the second truth, no less important, is that the art cannot grow except by what it feeds on ... Method consists in using knowledge to gain further knowledge, ... and the mind equipped with method and no content ... is an absurdity. (pp. 10-11)**

The experiences of what this researcher has found during the last thirty years in classroom teaching using a mind equipped with method and content was also reflected upon in this study. Hopefully it will not be thought an absurdity. The research is basically reflective, internalized concrete revision strategies which over thirty some years of working with children in teaching them how to write have brought the researcher to do this study.

Procedures for Data Collection

As stated earlier, within action research this researcher made use of many of the tools of ethnography. Agar (1986) describes ethnographic research as work that "requires an intensive personal involvement, an abandonment of traditional scientific control, an improvisational style to meet situations not of the researcher's making, and an ability to learn from a long series of mistakes" (p. 12). Within this context various tools were used for data collection such as observation, interviewing, document analysis, teacher/researcher journal entries, field notes, audio-taped interviews and some student samples were analyzed to describe the teachers perceptions in terms of structure and style. Original works were left in the classroom available to this study. Anonymity was assured through the use of fictitious names and locations, as has been stated earlier, as a safeguard to protect the

participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality The teacher's journal was kept by the teacher and any copies made kept confidential. The data was shared collaboratively with the classroom teacher to ensure accuracy of interpretations and to ensure that ethical standards were met. This formed the basis of the data used in the study.

Interviews were held mainly with the teacher but one interview was held with the school principal who appeared enthusiastic about the programme and identified what he saw as the strengths of the programme and the teacher. Another interview was held with one of the parents who expressed strong approval of the programme and identified many positive effects that it had on her child;. A fourth interview was held with another teacher who expressed strong support for Pat and the wonderful assistance she had given to the interviewed teacher stating that they were really "collaborating and learning from each other". Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggest that "in social research, if one relies on a single piece of data there is the danger that undetected error in the data-production process may render the analysis incorrect. If, on the other hand, diverse kinds of data lead to the same conclusion, one can be a little more confident in that conclusion" (p. 198). From the researchers perspective the four different interview sources helped to provide triangulation, or, a validation check. By collecting data concerning the same phenomenon (in this case, Pat's language writing programme) from four different sources, I was able to confirm my findings.

The teacher willingly shared copies of various documents pertaining to her planning, evaluating, and reporting procedures. Copies of work and the anecdotal records for three students were collected by the researcher. From Pat's perspective, her documents were very much in the process of development. In consideration of their personal nature, I did not judge it

ethical, in a sense, to publish any of Pat's planning or evaluation documents. And it would be a study in itself to examine and document her evaluation process.

Procedures for Data Analysis

The analysis of data was not a process which began entirely after data collection had been completed. Within action research, data interpretation is an ongoing process, from which Smith (1978) has identified a variety of discriminable intellectual operations while researchers are in the field observing, informally talking and listening, and collecting and reading documents. First, immersion in concrete perceptual images, which, by complete involvement in the day-to-day setting produces a wealth of particulars of the:

> **people, situations, events, occasions and so forth. ... The potency of this overwhelming flood of unorganized data to disturb one's cognitive map of structures, hypotheses, and point of view cannot be overestimated. One sits in wide-eyed and 'innocent' wonder and tries to capture, as much as possible, in the field notes and summary observations and interpretation the drama going on.**

Second, the interpretive side, which from the ongoing events, ideas, associations and insights seems to "pop-out" of the process of observation. These asides are noted at the time of impression and can be extremely useful in later analysis. Finally, conscious searching is an active searching for order, patterns or broad themes "which seem to break the phenomenon into large chunks or domains" (Smith, 1978, 333). The conscious search for meaning, themes and/or categories occurs concomitantly with data collection.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that the collection of data is "controlled" by the emerging theory, and title the process, "theoretical sampling".

> **Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly**

> **collects, codes and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. (p. 45)**

The utilization of Smith's (1978) technique for handling and processing data was seen as both applicable and appropriate to the present study. Wherever possible, extended interaction collected as data were included in the body of the study. Such lengthy inclusions not only help create the context in which data were collected, but give credence to Mehan's (1978) notion of exhaustive data treatment. Such methodological procedures were considered consonant with the nature of the data being sought and the length of time over which the study was conducted.

In this study analysis took the form of perusing transcripts and field-notes until themes emerged. Similar to sorting Grandma's huge jar of buttons. Each idea (button) was individually studied and sorted looking for similarities and eventually 'piles' similar (buttons) began to develop. During data collection the researcher was aware that, in some way, data analysis began to take place in the form of interpretation. Personal interpretation of the phenomena that the researcher observed produced particular data. In essence, data analysis took place on a continuous basis as the research evolved, beginning even as early as data collection. The realization that what the researcher was perceiving could differ widely between different observers due to their unique frames of reference. This brought to light once more the individual and personal qualities of perception and interpretation and how those qualities were integral to the study.

Further to the hidden analysis that takes place due to perceptual interpretations, a more formalized, preliminary analysis of the data was performed approximately one third of the way into the study and presented to the teacher. In her 1986 study Clandinin communicates her ongoing data

analysis to her key informants in the form of a letter. She follows the letter with a dialogue session, recording her informants' responses to the data analysis which forms the content of the letter. Although Clandinin's written research does not include an indepth account of the rationale for her technique, it seemed to work well for the purposes of her research and so a similar procedure was attempted in this study. A tape was sent to Pat, containing my preliminary analysis. Pat listened to the tape, made her own notations and then shared her responses to the tape by recording her own tape which we shared in one of our later interview sessions.

It was felt that the literary form of a tape would ease both the writing and the reading. It was easier to record and explain the initial themes and the ensuring questions in the somewhat informal, conversational manner of an audio-tape addressed to my collaborating teacher. It was also felt that from the perspective of the informant, the listening of an informal account might prove less threatening than a more formal analysis and the conversational tone might facilitate less inhibited feedback. Judging from the richness and the length of Pat's response, the procedure was an effective one. It served to enrich the data and refine our analysis.

The preliminary analysis and the informant's resulting comments served to enrich and verify the growing pile of buttons -- the emerging themes, some of which in the ensuring collection and the final analysis underwent change. Some of the preliminary themes changed into sub-themes or merged with other themes, took on greater depth and significance or became inconsequential. Sometimes it was simply a different label for the same theme.

In the final data analysis the themes are identified, described, and supported with examples from the data. It should be noted that the interview

transcripts provided the richest source of data for the study. The field-notes and documents functioned more as a back up or verification of the interview statements. In other words, was what my collaborator said really happening? In most cases the answer was yes. Any anomalies were noted and examined but were judged as minor and are not documented in this study. What is documented in this study are descriptions of the components of this particular writing programme and six themes that were seen to be representative of Pat's philosophy and of her approach to teaching the writing programme. The descriptions and themes are presented in Chapter VI.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The study was delimited in the following ways: only one classroom was visited, only one classroom teacher participated and was interviewed in depth and only language arts classes focused on as the place to begin looking. While the study was limited to the teacher beliefs, this researcher realizes that the children are a very important factor in the process but do not constitute the focus of this study. The study is limited to the beliefs of the teacher. Hence, children's work and their 'voice' is not part of this study.

The study was limited in the following ways: while both the researcher and BSS favour writing across the curriculum the researcher selected the language arts classes to study. The length of time spent in the research setting might be considered a limitation to the study. In this study the researcher was dependent on the teacher for her time and cooperation in order to access data about the teacher's stated philosophy and beliefs. The teacher stated what she believed and the researcher had few ways of validation other than tust. The limitations of the study concern those set by the researcher having chosen to study the methodology and philosophical beliefs of a teacher implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme of written composition.

Significance of the Study

This study offers a descriptive account of one method of teaching written communication and one teacher's praxis, highlighting the philosophy and beliefs underlying the programme, and in so doing, adds to the existing knowledge of theory and practice. It is to be noted that the BSS method has never been written up in the literature. The study was designed to produce knowledge of value to the teacher participant, to the researcher, and to the educational community since other teachers may identify with aspects of the study and its interpretation thus helping them to reconstruct their ideas about written communication. Inservice and teacher training programmes can be directed much more effectively if those personnel responsible for initiating and running them have some indication of the ideological positions which the participants bring to the programmes. Thus, teacher education and inservice programmes which concentrate on methods and instructional techniques can perhaps be directed more fruitfully at having teachers examine their personal belief systems, given that they have some knowledge of how this affects their classroom practices.

If evidence can be produced which demonstrates to teachers how, and to what extent, their beliefs are translated into the writing which is produced by their students, or the way in which their beliefs are translated into practice in implementing a new programme, then it is possible that teachers may reconsider the beliefs which underlie their classroom practice when they are expanding their professional development in this area.

Many decisions must be made in the course of a research project and an attempt has been made to relate those decisions and the rationale behind them through recounting the chronology of the research study.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher was a collaborative participant in this study. The researcher was involved with the teacher, asking questions, talking and working together in the analysis of the data collection but did not work directly with the students in the hope that the students would not have to become familiar and comfortable with another "teacher" in their room. It was felt that the results of the data would be "purer" with only the teacher interacting, especially since the study focus was on the observation of the teacher. Once the study was underway the researcher became an occasional visitor to the classroom. Working cooperatively with the teacher, the researcher and teacher probed the method being used in depth focusing on the teachers' understandings gained through the method.

The researcher carried out discussions and made notes of the dialogue with the teacher. The data enabled the researcher to determine other factors besides the structure of the method that might affect the students writing and their learning to write. The teacher interviews were conducted both formally and informally. The informal interviews served as a means by which the researcher could check assumptions and have the teacher clarify these. The purpose of the formal interviews was to gather descriptive data in the teachers' own words so that the teacher and researcher could develop insights on how the study was implemented and the results of the study interpreted. All transcripts were given to the teacher for verification and comment.

Research Schedule

The actual study began in September with the teacher and researcher sending an audio-tape back and forth each week along with constant telephone conversations. Classroom visits began on December 12, 1991 and continued until March 31, 1992, The schedule was flexible and worked around interruptions including various classroom activities, a teacher convention, and a week-long Spring break. The researchers' visits to the classroom took place in the morning, usually from just after class commencement until lunch time dismissal. The teacher generously offered to spend any of her spare teaching time, scheduled or not, talking with me. A vacant reception room provided a private and quiet place in which the researcher could tape record the interview sessions.

Nearing the middle of April the researcher felt that he had collected a sufficient amount of data and asked the students and the teacher to choose fictitious names for themselves which proved to be quite a novelty for some of the children.

At a later date, the researcher asked Pat to read over and comment on what had been written about her philosophy and beliefs and about her writing programme. Pat's response to the data analysis was very positive, indicating to the researcher that she felt the researcher had reported on her writing programme with accuracy and captured the essence of her philosophy and beliefs. It became apparent to the researcher that, from Pat's perspective her offering of time and energy for the purposes of this research project was reciprocated in the benefits she reaped through reflecting upon her practice and articulating her philosophy and beliefs plus having an added colleague to work with. This latter belief is something which became very apparent for me in working with a teacher in such an isolated area. The significance of the cooperative group was noted by Shumsky (1956) as he observed the critical

need for developing feelings of "belongingness" and community in a modern individualistic society. Community building creates the conditions for critical thinking and cooperative action (Carson, 1988, 3). "Doing" in these terms is an acting in solidarity with others to bring about changes. Elliot and Adelman (1973, 20) are interested in the implicit theories that underlie practice. Carr (1986) and Kemmis (1981) view action research as an appropriate science of education. The ideal of improving education, and the quality of social life in general through genuine democratic participation is limited by unequal power relations. These relations have developed historically and may be altered through the action research of participants.

Supporters of critically reflective action research see it as genuinely "educative" science of education which moves participants beyond merely solving their problems-in-view. By beginning with these, and by extending the range of analysis and reflection, they may gain new insights into their own work situations and taken-for-granted assumptions. Moreover, by exposing the blocks to free and open communication, participants might be able to build a truly democratic practice. True collaboration involves a serious and sustained effort be made to develop understandings among educators. It means the development of truly collegial relationships based upon an ethical responsibility for one another and for the children we serve.

Ethical Considerations

All parties were assured anonymity from name of person and place and were aware that they were able to withdraw their contributions from the project at any time.

In consultation with a university professor, samples of children's work in use were solicited on a voluntary basis. Parents and children were required to submit written consent for the use of the examples used in the study.

Complete anonymity was guaranteed. Any participants were able to withdraw their contributions at any time during the development and revision phases of the research. It is noted here that no individual withdrew from the study.

Trustworthiness:

Trustworthiness was considered to be vital to this study since the researcher was working with only one teacher. As stated on page 13, Guba (1981) suggests that a naturalistic study must address four concerns in order to establish its trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility was promoted through triangulation of data which involved using a variety of methods to collect the data and collecting it from different sources. The researcher interviewed a parent whose child was in the observed classroom as well as interviewing the school principal and a teaching colleague of the observed teacher. Data was collected through direct observational notes, journal entries of the teacher and researcher, transcripts of formal and informal interviews, photographs as well as discussions on an informal basis with people whom the researcher came in contact with during the time spent in the school and community.

Transferability from the context of the study to other contexts was attempted by writing "thick descriptions" of the data. By providing an extensive amount of description the reader is aided in determining the degree of "fit" between contexts.

Dependability of the data was promoted by using multiple methods of data collection, as noted above, and by documenting fully the process by which the data was collected and analyzed.

Confirmability was aided by a confirmability audit, which involved having an individual unassociated with the data, confirm that the data supports the interpretations, and that the interpretations were consistent with the data. Besides the confirmability audit the researcher discussed interpretations with professors, researchers and graduate students at the University of Alberta and with colleagues in the Edmonton Public School System. An analysis and interpretation of the data follows in Chapter VI.

Chapter VI

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

This chapter presents a two part data analysis. Firstly, a brief analysis of the classroom, the language arts activities and the teacher. Brief in an attempt to spare the reader lengthy detailed description and yet provide ("thick description" Guba, 1981) a feel for the classroom in which the research was undertaken. Secondly, an analysis of the themes that emerged and were selected which characterize the philosophy and beliefs of the teacher in implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme in the language learning programme studied. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary.

The interpretation is presented from interpreting verbatim quotes from the data which consisted of transcriptions of audio-recordings, teacher and researcher journal entries, interviews of the principal, another teacher and a parent, field-notes of direct observations and a description of how the themes emerged.

The Classroom

Upon entering the classroom one was met with a well organized area. The visual effect of the classroom was obviously a major concern of Pat. Neatly arranged and functional in design with colourful and visually appealing displays of students work and bulletin boards which display needed information which the students have access to in their work. The bulletin boards were always displaying different themes on each of my visits. The themes corresponding to the units of study going on at the time. The walls were covered in text providing lists of words of various types for the children to make use of in their writing such things as lists of "ly" words, 'ing' words and so on which the children had found. The room atmosphere gave the

feeling of warmth and invited you into an area that looked busy and alive. An atmosphere that was prepared for learning and invited you to take part. The teachers desk was at the back corner of the room by the windows and the student desks were always arranged in rows although Pat told me **"that the desk arrangement changes depended on the activity of the time."** The shelves were always neat and orderly with the counter tops holding various files and materials which the children required in the course of the day. One wall was complete windows with shelving from one side to the other under the windows. While the design was a self-contained classroom there was a connecting doorway into the next classroom. These two classrooms shared a little alcove space between them for various functions. I noted that the room was used by individual children and small groups of children to read and share work. On one visit I observed that a parent was working with a child from the other room in this little alcove.

The room contained a classroom library and the school central library was located down the hallway from the classroom. The bulletin boards in the room were well used with materials of a self-help nature; theme studies; and student work. All of the items were functional in educational terms and none of the them were decorative in appearance or purpose save for the bulletin board displaying the calendar which changed monthly to suit whatever holiday fell during the month. The materials were created by the teacher or students as a direct contribution to or result of their learning which pleasantly surprised the researcher.

The Students

All of the students in the class come from a rural setting with a similarity of socio-economic backgrounds and home situations. Through Pat's comments about her students and their work, I learned a great deal

about the children in her room. Being in a rural setting all of the students took the school bus to and from school which meant that all of the children were required to eat lunch at school. The children ate their lunches in their own classrooms under teacher supervision. The children always appeared well groomed and ready for instruction. During the course of the study I never witnessed any student making negative comments or engaging in any type of negative behaviour. The students showed respect and appreciation for each other and the teacher. **"It is interesting to note that all of the children are English Second Language students. None of the students have English as a first language at home. Few have televisions, and a few have good books at home. Education is not a premium concern here (in this community). Home and church are the backbone."**

The Teacher

Pat functioned in a role that displayed her belief structure and upbringing and the present paradigm which she holds of teaching. She **"believes that children require structure in the classroom and need to feel a sense of security in that setting ".** She holds high expectations for herself and her children and **"believes that the children usually live up to the expectations that you have for them."**

"When the year commenced the element of choice was limited because each child needs to find it's own level within the classroom operation," Pat stated further, **"Because I believe in small steps to success so that the expectations become internalized and a reality for the children."** Thus as the months progressed there was more and more room for choice. **"In my classroom they have a lot of choice especially right now as they have shown me that they are capable of handling it."** In the language learning programme

there was almost never two children working on the same project at the same place at the same time. There was always a lot of variation in what Pat's children accomplished. This may in part have its drawbacks in the children sharing their work as each child is individually independent at their level. However, they did consult and assist each other during the writing process.

Pat always appeared very relaxed and spontaneous in her manner. She was always very 'open' with them in sharing her feelings and thoughts. Her keen sense of humor and her genuine caring was evident in the way in which her students responded to their work and herself. Pat spent many hours in the evenings and on weekends in her classroom.

Professionally Pat was regarded by her colleagues in high esteem. She was always willing to share ideas and assist her fellow teachers. In particular she had spent a great deal of time with the teacher next door to her classroom collaborating on projects and offering her support which the teacher sought out.

Pat was very self-evaluative and reflective of her teaching which in turn made it easier for the researcher to collaborate with her in this study.

Classroom Organization

Pat's classroom displayed great harmony and yet within the language learning there was great diversity. Children were given a great deal of freedom of movement in the classroom forming and reforming groups under the teacher's direction. The students were aware of their responsibilities and expectations along with the limits as to how far they could go. Once the concepts were introduced through whole class instruction the teacher went into a role of facilitator and guide to the children's learning.

Themes

I. Pat's Philosophy

"My belief structure is certainly a lived part of my culture and upbringing and is reflected in the present paradigm which I hold."

It was evident from my observations in the classroom that Pat's philosophy was lived in the way in which she taught her lessons and shared her beliefs with her students.

"I believe that it is important to have high expectations for yourself and your children. Children usually live up to the expectations that you have for them."

I noted that many of Pat's comments in the transcripts included statements like " I believe ...", and "In hind sight ..." which indicate to me that Pat is a reflective practitioner in regards to her teaching and philosophy. Pat stated at one point:

"I base my teaching, my whole process in teaching, on reflection and research. Reflection in the sense that I look at those beautiful faces in front of me. I amaze myself that I really think I can understand exactly what their minds are thinking. ... And I think to myself ok if I can't do it that way how can I expect them to do it that way. It doesn't make a lot of sense so then I have to look for something different. Something that does make sense. What ticks for me and if it, if I really believe in something and if it ticks for me I think my enthusiasm, my zest for it, kids will feel it and my teaching will become better because I really feel it. Now feeling, it sounds very ambiguous, but it's something which comes from within and they see this."

At the beginning of the study when gathering background information I asked Pat to talk about her history and why she was implementing this particular programme and she replied:

"I think it has something to do with more of who I am and what works for me and what I think can work for kids and I really base a lot of it on when I was a kid in the classroom and knowing how I felt about certain things and what I've seen happen with kids for example I really have felt for a long time that kids need a base to work from. That's been my belief right from my first

day in the classroom and it has guided me all along until I'm at this point now and it's still guiding me. That you have a belief structure, you have a philosophy but you have to adapt it to the children that are in your room and that is your job as a teacher."

As I listened to Pat and observed her programme, I began to notice that she truly attempted to join philosophy and practice.

Pat was very much aware of the current research in the area of language learning and education in general. She was quite excited about a book by Roland Barth, (1991), Improving Schools from Within which she had just read. During the time we had together Pat mentioned several articles which she had read. Pat mentioned at one point:

"I have always enjoyed teaching writing even before I knew how to do it. I always found the writing process, and it is a process, very fascinating and I enjoy writing in my own personal life. This programme has given me a real love and appreciation for teaching writing and for writing myself. I share my thoughts with the children so that they can realize it is at times very difficult to come up with that one certain word or phrase. I also share with them the auto-biographies of authors. Like Charlotte's Webb took E.B. White three years to write. I also share my own personal reading with the children, if it's appropriate. For example I shared bits and pieces of "The Grapes of Wrath" when I was teaching a unit on the Great Depression in Social Studies. They were enthralled!"

It was obvious that Pat incorporated her own knowledge into her language learning programme thus engaging in a great amount of reflection and self-evaluation in her teaching.

II. Incentives

In one interview Pat made the comment that:

"Writing is far more a creative activity than reading so that a teacher can generate in the course of a year tremendous love for it. However prior to getting to that self-intrinsic stage children need much more mundane, extrinsic incentives in the classroom to 'get them over the hump' much like piano playing students require. In the Blended Structure and Style programme there are numerous learning strategies applied to make the learning experiences more meaningful and reinforcing to the process of writing."

Repeating what Pat had stated: "In the Structure and Style programme there are numerous strategies applied to make the learning experiences more meaningful and reinforcing to the process of writing." Two of these unique incentives were the massive amounts of varied writing experiences which alternate monthly between the creative writing strand and the essay writing strand using large amounts of good literature selections to provide the writers an exposure to all types of print material from factual to fictional. Pats use of the idea of cooperative learning after whole class instruction put children in unique learning environments whereby they learn from and assist each other. Pat stated:

"When the year begins the element of choice is limited because each child needs to find their own level within the classroom operation. That is I believe in small steps to success. So that the expectations become internalized and a reality for the children. Thus as the months progress there is more and more room for choice. In my classroom they have a lot of choice especially right now as they have shown me that they are capable of handling it. In the language learning programme there are almost never two children working on the same project at the same place at the same time. There is always a lot of variation in what they do. This may in part have its drawbacks in the children sharing their work as each child is individually independent at their level. However they do consult and assist each other during the writing process. I believe in limits and boundaries with choice and freedom within the 'fence'. The 'fence' grows as the year progresses."

The children in the classroom knew the expectations that had been established and worked well in a cooperative manner. Pat made use of incentives which supported the writing programme and classroom learning activities. Pat stated:

"I believe that lack of incentives is one reason some classrooms fail in their goal of writing. For some reason a well taught classroom lesson is not enough for some children. Like I told you the other day there are some who require other strategies to help them 'over the hump'. Almost everyone wishes to succeed and the area of writing is no exception. The teacher must plan in the area of writing for ideas which will inspire, improve and increase writing."

Obviously, one of the major means of gaining experience is through increased writing. A student who wishes to write must obviously have incentive to do so. While self-incentive is important the responsibility for much of the elementary level motivation rests squarely on the shoulders of the classroom teacher which Pat also believes. Many teachers wrongly assume that threats of testing and examinations is incentive enough for a writer to want to write. Unfortunately, some students see no immediate purpose for writing and believe that they have an automatic god given right to be promoted. To develop a better understanding of this situation I shall describe some of the factors of incentive which Pat uses in her programme: the straight physical aspects, built in system of perks, type of instruction, environmental issues and teacher modelling are but a few of the incentives of which Pat is aware.

The physical aspects of Pats classroom include such minor things as room temperature, noise level both external and internal. In the morning and during the day Pat would check the thermostat and sometimes close the classroom door. The arrangement of furniture was flexible depending on what was going on at the time but Pat was always aware of the flow, instruction and retrieval of materials. Pats' physical aspects also included the physical condition of the students which she monitored daily usually by quietly asking a particular student if they were feeling fine.

The classroom charts were positioned where everyone in the classroom could see them to make use of them and made large enough to be workable. Children were free to make use of this material and knew that it had been developed with them for their consultation when required. The classroom walls indicated that this was a writing class. Models were up for the students to consult. Wall thesaurus of "ly" words and "ing" words were

clearly visible and children brought in words to add to the existing charts which were prominently displayed. Pat put the name of each child on their word card as it was added to the chart. For most of the charts and word lists the students did the work. They formed groups and brainstormed, and the teacher compiled them. Or at times they contributed individually. Chart paper lists of strong verbs and quality adjectives were visible relating to the topic upon which students were writing. Samples of student compositions were displayed. Every student had access to a dictionary and thesaurus and from my observations I could see them being used. Sketches and drawings illustrated similes, "The kitten was as fat as a balloon" and colour symbolism "green with envy". The walls in Pats classroom clearly showed that her students were geared for writing. In discussing this one day Pat made the statement:

"I believe that you have to surround them and drown them with text which they have quick access to."

It was clear that Pat believed in and had established early in the year how the physical aspects of their room would operate and the role responsibilities each person plays in its physical operation.

Another factor of incentives in operation were the perks or awards established to help insure student success. No one desires failing. Most learners will succeed if there are sufficient provisions made for success. Pat made use of the incentives which the Structure and Style programme encourages. Pat made use of reminder signs which hung on the wall as reminders for the children. She also made little individual desk top reminder signs to put on individual desks. Other incentives observed in operation were Pats "Writing Around the World" board, radio productions, public speaking, and Dr. Max, the mad scientist who reinforces writing. These are fully described in the book Blended Structure and Style by Dr. Webster

(1988) and will not be elaborated on in this study. Pat stated **"That while the programme is highly incentive in and of itself the greatest incentive is that all the all the children can be successful"**.

Educators have known for some time that curiosity level of learners can be drastically altered with the correct type of instruction (McCarthy (1981), Joyce (1984), Dunn (1987). Special attention needs to be given to match teaching methods to the learning styles of students. Teachers must be able to move from whole class instruction to small group instruction to individualized instruction many times during the writing process and this was quite observable in Pats' classroom.

Pat was aware that environmental factors affect students. While student activities and home life vary greatly, she attempted to correlate their work. Pat knew that children need time to think and write and a teacher's planning must accommodate such work. Pat knew her community and her students. She sent home monthly letters to show parents where they were in their writing programme. She held open-classroom events for the parents encouraging parents to come in to the school to see her programme in action. This was not an easy task in this rural community. Regardless of the environmental factors Pat clearly believed and understood that her students were her best ambassadors if they have incentive to learning.

A major incentive is the role model the teacher presents. Pat was viewed to be firm, fair and friendly. She showed her students that she cared for them and cared for their writing. She assisted them in their individual writing both during class time and in individual writing conference times. Before assigning a composition Pat sometimes wrote it herself. In this way she claimed, **"I can anticipate their problems. For example, if the composition focuses upon "an old woman", I can anticipate I will find that phrase repeated**

over and over so I know that I will have to discuss with the class and together develop appropriate synonyms with them."

From Pat's perspective, her knowledge of the students and individuals use of incentives allowed her to individualize instruction in her language learning programme and as Pat frequently stated **"get them over the hump".** Pat's use of the programme incentives was a key factor to her in assisting her students to achieve to their maximum potential in the writing programme. She stated: **"The careful analysis you, the teacher, build for incentives is critical to a successful writing programme and the use of it should be evaluated daily".**

III. Demonstrating Student Learning and Development

Pat and I often discussed the idea of students "strutting their stuff" which Pat held that:

> **"Increasing my focus on student progress is a way of increasing my effectiveness and of student learning. When the focus is on ensuring that each student is learning continuously, I become more adept at providing appropriate programming, seeing that student time is being maximized and desired learning is occurring."**

This statement of Pat's sat well with myself for as a school administrator I believe that this is a critical step in facilitating teachers. Having them focus on progress is to give them a chance to demonstrate student learning and development and to in fact allow them to actually witness the fact that their students and themselves are making progress. The teacher becomes challenged to identify learning, that is, to show a student's initial performance compared to improved performance. Teachers usually welcome the opportunity to share information about student improvement in those critical areas that are not easily measurable. The student is the major

benefactor because of improved programming and is likely to have improved self-esteem and confidence when he/she is assisted with recognizing progress. The following are some of the processes I observed in Pat's classroom in allowing her students to "strut their stuff":

1. Robert was invited to share what he was writing with the class. He began by showing the class a sample of his writing from September, whereas he now displayed what he was doing in February. He was able to point out many differences in his work and showed enthusiasm for writing, eagerly sharing details of the characters and story plot. Robert had begun to blossom and was aware of it.

2. In this observation I was allowed to sit in on Lisas' parent interview. Lisa demonstrated to her parents what she was learning. The session was a natural flow of parent, student, and teacher talk. There was a feeling of warmth, caring, enthusiasm, and interest. The parents were given information about Lisas' performance in the graded curriculum and about her work habits and learning style. Because the focus was on progress and future directions, everyone became motivated for future action. Pat stated that **"many parents give favorable feedback with the work being done".**

3. In this example the teacher held a conference with Elizabeth, and provided additional commentary for Elizabeth in demonstrating that her story was developing extremely well and the teacher and student agreed that she would likely be able to publish her story after one more revision. The natural and comfortable interaction between the student and teacher, together with smiles, gentle teasing, and stories of fun, were indicators of a healthy learning environment for the student. This demonstrated growth for both.

4. On another occasion, as the result of the principal being in the classroom, Billy had the principal casually comment on the writing which Billy was

doing. Billy appeared very relaxed and casual in talking with the principal and then continued on his way out to play at recess. I did observe the rather large smile on Billy's face as he went on his way. The principal seems very positive about the writing being done in Pat's classroom.

5. One day the entire class went off to the Grade One room to share their stories with their grade one pals. The children in Pat's room had adopted the children in Leslies' grade one room and had been paired off by their teachers. This was an on going activity that they usually shared once a week.

6. It was noted that Pat keeps very careful records of her students' writing and she gives detailed written and verbal feedback on their work.

It was obvious to myself that Pat was creative in developing approaches that fit best the teacher's and students' styles and levels of comfort. In my observations I observed that good things were happening. for students and that the demonstration activities prompted increased confidence and motivation for more competence for both the teacher and student. It appeared from such activities that both teacher and principal benefitted by an increased focus on progress. Pat acknowledged that she **"increased her knowledge of individual student performances and kept more anecdotal notes and work samples from such activities."**

Although teachers have been reporting progress on report cards for years, the limitations of report cards have not let teachers develop their expertise in focusing on progress, or in being able to prove that learning is occurring. Since Pat was given an opportunity to report on learning in a less restrictive method, she responded in a much more satisfying way. The reality of the classroom culture is that many schools seem to be organized to make things easier for adults, not to facilitate learning for children. This was not the case in Pat's classroom.

IV. Ownership

Pat and the researcher spent a number of discussions on why Pat had selected to implement the Blended Structure and Style programme for her classroom. She stated:

"Well I think it has something to do with more of who I am and what works for me and what I think can work for the kids and I'm really basing a lot of it on when I was a kid in the classroom and knowing how I felt about certain things and what I've seen happen with kids. For example, I really have felt for a long time that kids need a base to work from. You can throw all sorts of things at them but if you don't give them that base so they can assimilate it with what they already know how are they going to do anything with it? . . . I strongly believe that I am promoting creativity using the Dr. Webster format. I really think I am."

Pat and the researcher went on to look at how she had changed or adapted each of the units taken to date.

Unit One: Outlining -

Pat states: **"Unit one is very easy to follow and anyone can learn it within minutes. It is versatile because you can adapt it to your grade level very easily. By the time they get to my grade they only need a few weeks of it even if they have never had it before. I outlined multi-paragraph articles to give them the idea of paragraphing. I began public speaking just like the manual suggested however, time was a real problem and this is an area that I would like to look at and collaborate on more. As far as teacher instruction is concerned Unit One is by far the simplest one. The children enjoy the success they experience in this unit definitely. I think it sets the tone for a positive year in writing because the children experience success right from the beginning of their writing in the year."**

Unit Two: Summarizing

Pat stated: **"The children were quite anxious to summarize long before we were summarizing. They understood the process easily and readily. The**

summarizing was a natural follow-up from outlining. While the manual does not prescribe dress-up we began almost immediately in this unit to do simple dress-up points because the children recognized the need for elaboration in their writing. All through it was evident from their writing that they were making transfer of many of the reminder strategies. For most of October we used the New Practice Readers - Independent File Work. I took the stories that I thought were conducive - i.e., to good outlines and paragraphs and they chose stories that they wanted to work on and added dress-ups of their choice. At this point in time I was more interested in the structure than the content. Building a foundation but I was still able to provide choice which is part of my belief structure."

Unit Three: Summarizing Narratives

Pat states: "This is not an easy unit to teach. However if you use patience and go slowly with the students it's amazing how they will grasp what you are trying to teach them. The students seemed to really get a grasp as to what was required of them in Narrative story writing once they saw the model. It is interesting to note how you must continuously try to motivate the students to move to a new and higher level of writing, without making it a chore for them. In this unit I introduced the idea of fusing two sentences into one. The students really seemed to take that idea for a ride. They like the power that went with that. They also seemed to feel like they could begin manipulating information for their own means and ends."

Unit Four: Summarizing a Reference

Pat told the researcher: "I have not done this formally yet because I am transferring the skills into the Social Studies and Sciences, etc. I find with this particular class of children that they can handle it. It is amazing to see how the children really seem to fly with the material. Some students really seem

to enjoy looking into the reference books for subjects that are of high interest to them."

Unit Five: Stories from Pictures

It was evident that Pat enjoyed this unit from her comments. "By far the most enjoyable unit to date. I believe the children would also share my sentiments on this as well. They really took to it. Three pictures to represent three paragraphs is something which I always did with them because it was another way to reinforce the model. I did about five weeks of it because the enjoyment was still alive. The children were much more capable of independence in this unit because the three pictures probably got them thinking and they used their imaginations to make the outline. I found their use of imagination was much improved after the unit. I feel that this is a natural lead up into the creative writing unit. Take the pictures away, use your imagination. They find it quite easy now to make a quick outline from content. It is interesting to note with this programme, that the students never seem to sit there and say, "Oh its writing again!" They look forward to it, and seem to have no problem putting their noses to the grind stone and concentrate for a good 40 minutes on writing, sometimes 80 minutes or more at a stretch, at their request. I have seen other students in other classes who are not involved in this type of programme who hate writing, because it is too open ended and becomes a chore rather than a challenge of joy.

Unit Seven: Creative Writing

Pat states: "This unit was anticipated with a certain amount of trepidation on the teachers part because of the ambiguity that "Creative Writing" poses to not only the teacher, but the students as well. All fears and anxieties aside the attempt was made to impart upon the students skills to help them begin creative writing with joy and freedom.

"As has been mentioned numerous times there was a desired attempt on the teachers part to teach from the students perspective, to help them gain better control of how they could master creative writing."

It should also be noted that the teacher Pat believes "Creative Writing" to be a part of the whole BSS writing programme.

"We began with just simple discussion on the topic of what creative writing was, and what it was not. It was something that would allow the students more freedom in their writing, and this would show their true creativity. It was not something that was cruel and evil, lurking in the dark to capture and overwhelm them, taking them into the abyss."

"The students responded quite enthusiastically to the brainstorming we did at finding topics to write about. After we completed filling in one board we looked at a topic that was pleasing to all. We found one and we brainstormed again as to themes and minute details about this subject. The attempt was made to make it look as elementary and easy a process as possible. This way the students would feel confident, and be able to take it into their own writing when working independently."

"The students were shown the "Model". This allows them to inadvertently keep the story on topic, and helps it flow as well. Too often students, when allowed to write freely, will not really develop a coherent story. This on the other hand helps them control their creativity, and directs it into a path that allows for not only coherence, but creativity as well. Too often educators feel that if you put any restrictions on writing there is no creativity left. It is believed by myself that this is not the case. Creativity is not stifled, it simply is given a more direct path to follow, thus showing much more maturity in the writing process. The students in this particular

class were much more motivated to write, and their stories were extremely creative and coherent."

Pat concluded this ownership section with these words: **"In hind sight I must say that I have learned a tremendous amount from having to do this diary, and the audio's as well. It has really impressed upon me the value of this programme. It integrates a lot of great programmes into one, without forcing you to do everything exactly like the "book" says. It allows the students to be creative, but on the same hand also helps them stay on a controlled path of coherence. It is a great programme that more educators should use. I would recommend it to everyone. I see a wasteland of writing in Jr. High and up. I'd love to see the programme extended upward to those levels."**

From our discussions together and the observations of the researcher it is evident that Pat agrees with Graves (1978) statement:

> **"... Barriers to good writing are not as high or insurmountable as they seem. Students who write poorly can improve quickly with skilled, personal attention that concentrates on what they know and can tell others. Good teaching does produce good writing." (p. 4)**

And it is also evident that as Robert Conners' (1978,) in his examination of teachers' "thought processes, beliefs and principles during instruction" concluded that:

> **"The dimension of teacher behavior that deals with how teachers think, that is plan, make decisions and judgements, and the underlying beliefs and principles that influence these processes, has been a relatively neglected research tradition." (p. 2)**

It is very clearly shown in Pat's classroom that she takes Conners' conclusions to heart in her ownership of her teaching and instruction in the language learning of her students in that the assumption that the curriculum which the teacher develops is based to a large extent on the ideological stance which the teacher holds. It would appear that Pat took ownership of the programme

which she implemented and because of this ownership the learning which took place with her students was significant. Teacher ownership is important.

V. Process/Product or Both

It is evident from this study that the definition of writing varies according to the theoretical orientation which the teacher brings to the writing situation. A product orientation suggests that writing is viewed as a collection of component skills, and writing competency is viewed mainly in terms of the surface features of the writing. In contrast a process orientation emphasizes the meaning which the writer is trying to communicate through his/her writing. Emphasis falls on the ideas which are developed through the writing process, and competency is viewed in terms of the writer's ability to organize, develop and express ideas with vigor and clarity. While this researcher believes this is likely the case this study was implemented to see if the two schools of thought could not be blended as suggested by the Blended Structure and Style programme. Pat stated:

> **"My belief in the individuality of the child definitely affects how I teach. I believe that each child can be successful if you discover their level and then let them experience success at that level. It allows me to challenge the bright student while building the self-confidence of the slow child. I have always wished when I was in school myself that there had been a chance for more individuality. I saw how the bright students were dying of boredom and the slow students were drowning. I saw this in elementary. My grade one teacher didn't really know how to handle the few of us who were beyond the grade level at which she taught. I knew in grade one already that I wanted to be a teacher. And I guess that is how I made my decision that I wanted to have individuality in my classroom if I was ever a teacher and what I call humane education" and ..."This talk about process and product bothers me. We are in the job of teaching children and should use what is best to fit the needs of the child. You know we get on a lot of band-wagons without asking why? There is no one "right" way. Teachers have to select what will work best for the child in their care. Student success lies in the hands of informed and skillful teachers. With the best of children's literature and innovative**

> **methodologies, optimal programmes can be designed that challenge and engage our children as well as ourselves. We must continue to questions, experiment, reflect and integrate new perspectives with past experience. I consider myself to be a language learning teacher and eclectic. Do you want more ... ?"**

From my observations of Pat in her classroom and from our discussions I would have to conclude that Pat is indeed eclectic using whatever she deems workable for a particular child. As the researcher I observed things which would be considered by many to be "whole language" along with strategies which would be considered "traditional" and I feel Pat is indeed taking ownership of what is available to assist her in her language learning for both her process and her product appear successful.

VI. Reading and Writing

In Pat's language learning programme the students were actively and freely engaged in natural, interactive activities, spontaneously integrating the language learning. The interaction among language users appeared to occur as a flow from whole group instruction. When I asked Pat why it was important for the students to talk about their reading and writing she replied:

> **"I believe that is where the understanding comes in.Just go into our staff room and listen to the talking. Or go out at recess and listen to the talking. You get to learn a lot of other view points. That to me is where the learning comes in. I have often stated that children are the best teachers."**

Pat felt that the purpose for reading and writing is understanding. In one of the interviews she said, "We read to write and we write to read." To Pat and her children this meant to share in the understanding of the writing and reading and to interlink it to the life of the reader and writer as well. Pat's willingness to encourage children to incorporate various interpretations of meaning and literary response and to incorporate that into their learning activities supported that idea. The researcher overheard her

say to one child, "**Oh Peter I really like the way that you expressed that. It is very similar to the way Green said it in her story.**" When I mentioned this to Pat after the lesson she stated: "**I try to get them to see how other writers and readers think and work. Then during their discussion times I try to encourage them to talk about the things they are writing and reading. I am trying to extend their knowledge, their experiences, using their own experiences and relating it to the story or writing which they are sharing with their partner or in small groups. I want them to predict, to internalize with their experiences and get them thinking on their own.**"

This was evident as the students were involved in working together in study groups, discussing their ideas with their class mates and sharing their writing and reading with the class. The literature facilitated an interactive and integrated approach and the approach facilitated the use of literature.

It was not apparent in Pat's classroom if the reading programme fed into writing or the writing programme fed into reading. It was noticeable that the pupils were engaged in process writing during which time the students wrote creative stories utilizing a structure of class developed words and a model to meet their own individual needs. Top students worked beyond the model. It was evident that the children's thoughts and ideas were expanded, developed and liberated through their reading and writing in Pat's classroom. Thus, literary response has the potential to become the curricular material around which a literature-based language learning curriculum is centered. (Hickman, 1980; Purves & Monson, 1984; Benton & Fox, 1985; Galda, 1982). This response can be from either the written word or the read word as was evident in this classroom of Grade Fours'.

Summary

This chapter offered a description of Pat's language learning programme and the philosophy and beliefs underlying the programme. From information about the classroom it was possible to draw out six themes that appear to represent the philosophy and beliefs of the teacher. The six themes included: 1. Pat's Philosophy; (2) Incentives; (3) Demonstrating Student Learning and Development; (4) Ownership; (5) Process/Product; and (6) Reading and Writing.

Pat's philosophy and beliefs permeate her language learning programme from start to finish as Pat reflected critically upon her reasons for implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme to her practices in language learning and made programme changes to meet the needs of the students in her care.

Chapter VII

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter provides a summary of the study and the conclusions reached in terms of the three questions which were posed in the study. (l) Does the teacher see the connection of reading tied into a good writing programme? (2) Does the teacher feel that the method of Blended Structure and Style is an effective Literature-Based programme which can be implemented in the language learning programme of the elementary school? and, (3) Does the teacher indulge in critical reflection and, if so, does critical reflection affect subsequent instruction? Implications for teacher education programmes, for teaching practice, and for further research are presented. Finally, the philosophical and theoretical implications of the study are reviewed in light of the reflective, collaborative journey.

Children are placed in classes in order that they might learn the writing process at a level commensurate with their abilities and enjoy a learning environment characterized by success, rather than failure. The task of providing this setting for writing rests ultimately with the classroom teacher.

Within the context of the instructional writing programme, success experiences per se, and success in learning to write are dependent, in part, on the teacher using instructional methods and materials which approximate the instructional ranges of the students to whom he/she is responsible each year.

The major purpose of this study was to follow one teacher who was implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme developed by Dr. J. B. Webster and to describe the programme and implementation which this teacher selected to use to teach children to write in her language learning programme. Through classroom observations and unstructured interviews

conducted within the study period, data pertaining to the language learning programme and to the teacher's beliefs and philosophy was collected. In the data analysis I sought first to generate a qualitative description of the programme components and second to identify and present themes that emerged as representative of the underlying philosophy and beliefs of that teacher's programme.

In the introduction of this study the researcher examined the concept of the Children's' Literature environment of the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning. The researcher in this study would suggest that the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning and the Blended Structure and Style Programme are viable programmes. This programme was not being compared to any other programme. However, this is an avenue for future study.

Capsule of the Journey

In July of 1991 when the researcher began to think about the coming year of study it was known by the researcher that a study in the area of the Blended Structure and Style system was the area of interest desired to be pursued.

Once the researcher found the teacher who would be involved in the study the researcher knew that researcher and teacher would be looking to disentangle the significance of classroom life from the many random and extraneous events that surround it. Both researcher and teacher knew that the researcher would be looking at the teacher implementing the BSS system to see what the teacher does to allow a writing programme to flourish and what, on occasion, hinders it.

Although at the researcher's proposal presentation three research questions were asked the researcher was not at all certain, when the inquiry commenced, just exactly what direction the action research would take.

The researcher began, naturally, by schooling himself in the principles and procedure of ethnography and action research, by reading, talking to researchers, and trying to prepare for the work which lay ahead. As stated earlier, the researcher was well aware of the pitfalls of what Ray Rist (1980) calls "blitzkrieg ethnography" - the tendency for researchers to rush into schools, collect their data, and hurriedly leave - and the researcher knew that this would not be the case in this study. The northern isolation assisted in this as it provided for periods of total immersion in the field because it was not easy to rush in and out. As a result, long before the study officially began, the researcher met with other researchers, read, visited classrooms of friends, studied other researcher field-notes, read accounts of field-work, and prepared lists of questions and checklists of items that the researcher wanted to study.

In taking a qualitative approach the researcher knew it would not end up with neat research designs, clear-cut boundaries and controlled variables. But the researcher did find this involvement an enormously rich task requiring responses at the human level.

What was discovered was the development of trust. In this classroom the researcher has seen what allows for writing that has voice is a trusting relationship among the students and between the students and the teacher - where students feel comfortable about taking risks. Similarly the researcher has come to see that action research, like writing, offers the opportunity to go beneath the surface and study what is most intimate in teaching, and that, too, requires the development of trust.

The researcher was not aware of these connections when the study began. The connections came later, with time to stand back and reflect. In the beginning the teacher and researcher were aware only of the day-to-day work of taking field notes. Since, as has been mentioned, the location gave the researcher total immersion to spend days in the classroom and saved after-school time for meeting and comparing notes. Not only was the teacher helpful but the social life in this small compound (one school surrounded by six homes and two trailers being the only community for miles) also compounded the researchers body weight in that the researcher was always being asked out for meals.

About half-way into the study the teacher and researcher knew it was time to review notes, to synthesize, to step back and see what had been happening. The researcher took the opportunity to send Pat a tape, not wanting to produce analytic memos but to cross-check perceptions of what had been taking place in the classroom.

In the teachers' journal were recorded Pat's perceptions of classroom events, her students, and her thoughts about teaching this programme of writing and about the research being conducted in her classroom.

Over the months both the writing of the researcher and the teacher changed in tone and scope. Initially we began to ask questions, to clarify areas we did not feel comfortable about, to probe. And with each new round of writing, we included more. We wrote first of our perceptions, sprinkled with direct quotes from the tapes. We knew our frame of reference had to be pulled in to what we were looking for and at. To follow one upper elementary Grade classroom teacher's beliefs and philosophy that impacted her implementation of the Blended Structure and Style Programme of Writing in a literature-based language learning programme.

In the process, the researcher investigated how that teacher implemented the BSS programme. Through classroom observations and unstructured interviews both formal and informal, journal entries, field-notes, student work, and collaboration, data pertaining to the implementation of the BSS programme and to the teacher's beliefs and philosophy were collected. In addition, the principal, a parent and a teaching colleague were interviewed.

In the study the researcher has compared the arrival of themes to the sorting of buttons in Grandma's button jar. It could also be compared to panning for gold - dipping the pan into the water, shifting and shaking until something appeared, saving what was useful, discarding what was not useful, and dipping back into the source, over and over again.

As the "you and I" changed to "we and us" we realized that we were forging a research team with such comments in the evening as "Tomorrow maybe we should consider...." As the researcher, I came to see that my task was different from the teachers' but I did not necessarily see myself as knowing more than she did. In fact, when it came to understanding her classroom, the researcher thought that the teacher knew more than the researcher did but often without knowing that she knew it. The researcher saw his job to tap this implicit knowledge and to work with the teacher to make that knowledge more explicit.

To accomplish this, the researcher needed to check his perceptions, again and again, with the teachers'. Notes, comments in journals, chats over coffee and discussions on into the early hours of the morning - all these became ways for each of us to ask each other "Does my vision match yours? Am I seeing what you are doing in the classroom the way that you see it

yourself?" The researcher also asked the same type of questions with professors and graduate students at the university to check perceptions.

The researcher had to remember that he was working with a teacher like himself. I could not imagine behaving like traditional researchers, keeping my theories and interpretations to myself until the publication of a final report. I felt accountable to Pat. I thought that she had a right to know what I was thinking as I sat in her classroom. And I knew that, although at times it would have been easier for me to remain silent, had I done so would have been giving up one of the most valuable aspects of our collaboration: the classroom dialogue which would enable us to arrive at a common understanding of the classroom, an understanding that would make sense not only to us but also to other teachers. We were truly becoming trusted participants.

Believing that I would learn more by studying one classroom and one teacher deeply than by studying three or four teachers superficially, we let our inclinations guide us. But always we tried to examine them and took notes on our answers. Pat was often seen jotting things down in her little pocket notebook and at times we both laughed out-loud sharing later what it was that we had noticed. I could not leave myself behind when I sat in her classroom, but I kept on questioning and testing my biases, to try to understand how they influenced what I saw.

By the end of the study I realized that I had begun to put down roots in Pat's classroom. I found that I had spent a lot of time in this school and district. Preparing to return to the city for the last time, I collected audio-tapes, interview notes, field-note books, and our own personal journals. As Pat and I loaded the car with data, we both wondered how we would make sense of it all. What events would emerge as important.

During the last few months of the study, data analysis took precedence over data collection. I still visited the classroom every other month to keep looking, to follow leads, hunches, but my primary focus was on the teacher implementing the writing programme.

Masses of data; bulging file cabinets; how to make sense of it? Where to begin? The researchers talk of triangulation; I felt like drowning! I began however to make my way through it.

In the data analysis I attempted first to generate a qualitative description of the programme components and second to identify and present themes that emerged as representative of the underlying philosophy and beliefs of that teacher's programme implementation. The work of Freire (1970) in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Graves (1983) in Writing: Teachers and Children at Work and Spradley (1980) Participant Observation provided this researcher with the sought after frame-work. The data is described in a descriptive presentation.

First, the teacher and the researcher worked our way chronologically, writing narrative accounts of classroom observations that combined our view taken from field-notes, to the teacher's view taken from her journal and transcripts of interviews. In this instance, our field-notes and the flow of time served as the main organizers, all other data fit into the chronological scheme.

Secondly, the teacher and the researcher took a logical approach and we let the writing units process principles which we had been looking at. We asked for example how students collaborating fits into the writing programme. It was here that the theme of ownership emerged and remained coming into the final study. It was in this approach that categories which we

derived from our understanding of the writing process formed the basis of our analysis.

Finally, we took our transcripts and journals as the main vehicle and asked: What, by virtue of being written about over and over, seems to matter to the teacher? Once we found a recurring theme, we asked: Are there examples of this theme being played out in the teacher's behaviour? These answers led us to produce a portrait of the teacher, an analyses capturing what for us was the particular and unique core of Pat's implementation.

This was all preliminary, a way of immersing ourselves, coming to understand, discovering connections, deepening our understanding. We needed to write and write until we saw what we had. We needed many cuts through the data until moments that mattered and the telling incidents emerged. We felt like film-cutters. We discovered that chronologies were useful, but they went on too long. Who wanted to read what happened every day in every way. We felt that imposing categories from without did not capture the life we knew we had experienced by being in this classroom.

The researcher went into this study with the purpose of studying how a teacher teaches and implements a programme in teaching writing. I discovered that what I collected was how a teacher taught where, in this case, the subject happened to be writing. I saw that this teacher would teach any subject according to who she was - that her beliefs, biases, preferences, and predilections make her the teacher she was. I came to see that the culture of writing instruction in any given class consists not only of the particular approach or theories guiding the teacher, nor simply the histories and personalities of the students, but also - perhaps especially - the personal stance of the teacher.

When Pat and I got together for the last time, Pat read the analyses and write-up which I had completed. She responded, poked fun at my categories and was sometimes made to feel uncomfortable by being so carefully examined. She smiled and chuckled at my preoccupation with understanding. She reminded me that she was just content to teach. At this time we felt almost relieved that the bulk of the writing had been done, the going back and reviewing, the looking again and again, the letters, tapes and phone calls had taught us something.

When we first began, we looked at a teacher's behaviour and asked the most basic questions. What does this mean? all we could answer was: We do not know. I was an outsider. Now months later this has all changed. I knew when Pat did something, what it meant - to her, to her students. Glances, raised eyebrows, sitting, standing, moving, being quiet or talking, the most minute pieces of behaviour and the largest actions - all had accumulated meaning, significance. When I now asked, What does this mean?, I had answers with an insider's perspective.

To capture the life of the classroom, to show what teaching was like, I eventually included the content description of the classroom, the students, and the teacher. I did so for many reasons. First, I believe in the inherent power of the reader to understand and imagine. For as readers, we learn from such descriptions and go on to construct our own.

I believe that the report is strongest when it is not trying to prove anything. This is not to say that we were not rigorous, but we think that our rigor can best be measured by readers who ask themselves, Does this story ring true?, or Is this teacher and students believable? I was not looking to create an exportable classroom. I was hoping that just as readers of literature come to examine themselves in the light of characters whose lives and

thoughts speak to them, so teachers who read this study will use the particulars of details I have amassed to illuminate both the teacher they are reading about and their own teaching lives.

More than anything else, I have come to see that each classroom is a world unto itself; each year has its own integrity, its own story. To cut each classroom up into little bits to serve some general point seemed, to me, to run counter to everything I had learned. As a result, I have attempted to let the story of the teacher unfold as the teacher taught.

I have discussed Structure and Style and the implementation of this programme of writing by observing just one teacher in one classroom. I discussed what I learned about this teacher and writing. I discussed the notion of reflection and collaboration and the ways each can help teachers see more clearly what they are doing. And, finally, I look at what I call the act of seeing. The way in which we see affects how we teach.

The way I discuss Pat was the way I described it through my own eyes, but the reader will examine it through the eyes of the profession. This refers to all readers and writers who are also teachers and researchers, and to how all of us see or perceive the classroom and our work. It seems to this researcher that our professional lives would be enhanced if we could look more closely at, and let one another in on, our own lives, on the decisions which guided our research and on what we see when we study and teach.

As the study concluded the researcher was faced with the task of showing how this teacher studied, taught writing. And, at the same time, I am conveying all that I knew about her and her classroom of students - to provide readers with an insider's view of the writing process approach which Pat implemented in using Blended Structure and Style.

In the book by J. B. Webster, Blended Structure and Style in Written Communication (1988), the methods being advocated which contribute to the technological realities of the programme are specifically laid out for the teacher. Based upon the structure-style inquiry model, the units for each month are specified clearly with the strategies to be used in order to achieve success in writing.

One of the perceived strengths of the programme is the emphasis on knowledge and skills objectives being implemented as models or guides for the students to follow. Structure here being used in a positive sense. Another strength of the programme is its emphasis on a more "student-teacher-shared" mode of teaching. While acknowledging that it is unlikely that experienced teachers can or will change their style, this researcher believes that, with structure and style, the writing programme will be more meaningful to students. This researcher sees the possibilities in this programme, of students picking up a lot of life-long writing strategies while enjoying the journey.

Regular exposure to the staff and administrator of the school has led this researcher to arrive at an understanding of the programme in the larger school context. If it is important to the principal it will receive more than a passing glance from the staff. This importance accounted, in part, from the principal's willingness to allow a researcher into his school. His teachers being encouraged to familiarize themselves with the language learning programme and the resources presently available, and they have voluntarily used one of their "precious" professional development days to listen and share in the language learning document. It should be noted that the decision to be "in-serviced" occurred before this study was under-way.

It could be argued, also, that the current interest in qualitative research methods in education, stems, in part, from a recognition that in order to find out what is really happening in schools, researchers must spend a lot of time in a lot of classrooms. Classrooms are not the only places where education is going on day by day but they are also the places where the real power bases lie. Teachers teach and students learn and thus the most powerful human interaction takes place. Those of us who are not directly involved in that exciting educational process but who wish to assist the process in some way can at best offer whatever resources we have, be they information, materials, aid, and so forth. We cannot change the process; we do not have the power. Only the participants have that power.

One of the most inherent dangers in qualitative research is that of misinterpretation of the data. The researcher has no numbers to depend on for conclusions. The researcher alone is the one on whom all else depends. However, it would seem viable to suggest that if all attempts have been made by the researcher to retain objectivity, to deal fairly with what is written, observed or said and to respect the realities of the individuals concerned, some trust can be placed on that researcher when conclusions are drawn. Hopefully, the reader will arrive at the same or similar conclusions.

Again, The Research Questions

Research Question One: Does the teacher see the connection of reading tied into a good writing programme?

The language learning programme described in this study was literature-based and student centered. The reading programme formed a central basis of this teachers' classroom. The teacher read daily to the children. The children read daily in USSR time. Reading formed the idea

kernel for many of the writing activities. Children shared their reading with partners on a daily basis and often shared idea during whole class discussion on something which they had read. The answer to this research questions is positive.

Research Question Two: Does the teacher feel that Blended Structure and Style is an effective Literatue-Based programme which can be implemented in the language learning programme of the elementary school?

Pat's philosophy and beliefs that emerged from the study are represented by the following six themes: (1) Philosophy and Beliefs, (2) Incentives, (3) Demonstrating Student Learning and Development, (4) Ownership, (5) Process/Product or Both and (6) Reading and Writing.

These six themes represent a philosophy and a statement of beliefs that are most positive to the implementation of Blended Structure and Style in the language learning programme of the elementary school. The researcher feels that the answer to this research question is most positive based on the themes which emerged from the study.

Research Question Three: Does critical reflection by the teacher seem to affect subsequent instruction?

Pat's philosophical approach to language learning brings to mind Freire's notion of problem-posing education, while the particular practices involved in Pat's programme are very similar to the practices suggested by Graves. Pat's approach to teaching sought to liberate her students by fostering their independence as learners and as members of society. Individuality and creativity were encouraged. Pat was always engaged in dialogue both whole class and individually with her students encouraging them to reflect and analyze. Pat did not see herself in a hierarchical relationship but was learning with her students. They taught her many things which she reflected on and it

was evident from this researchers' observation that she was also teaching them. Both teacher and student learning with and from each other. Pat sought to empower her students. She was a critical thinker in that she constantly reflected on her own teaching/learning practices which consequently affected her on-going classroom practices. Pat encouraged this same type of reflection in her students.

Conclusions

The researcher believes that the conclusions of this study have a number of implications for the instruction of children's writing and for language learning. It is hoped that a further understanding of language learning, in particular of a writing process, will be gained. It is believed that the study will contribute to the existing body of research regarding writing in the classroom.

The findings of this study give rise to the following conclusions:

1. The use of the Blended Structure and Style programme indicated that this literature-based language programme has the potential to work in a process orientation. The teacher in this study had no difficulty in combining the traditional skills orientation with the process orientation. This indication from the model which the teacher exhibited was taken to mean that this particular teacher was indeed a reflective practitioner in regards to the writing programme.

2. It can also be concluded that the individual teacher's beliefs structure strongly affected the teachers teaching, instruction and writing programme.

3. It was also concluded that an integration of several methods and procedures best met the varying writing needs of students.

4. It can also be concluded that the practice of whole group teaching gives all students the same opportunity to succeed

because they are all exposed to the same skills. What is important is what takes place to reinforce the whole group instruction.

5. Employing cross-subject writing experiences gives the students more individual writing time and helps insure success.

6. The establishment of built in external incentives is essential if students are going to write beyond the basics or move forward with the fundamentals.

7. Writing and reading are basic to learning and should be developed together with one feeding into the other.

Possible Implications

While it is clearly noted that generalizations are difficult to make with an 'n' of one, the findings of this study resonate with implications gained through the study and of the researchers' many years of teaching this particular programme of BSS. At this early stage the researcher has taken cautious care to be reasonable in suggesting possible implications. Therefore, the following implications are tentative and await further research validation.

The intent of this study was not to compare programmes but to simply follow a teacher implementing and adapting the Blended Structure and Style programme for language learning in her classroom. This being the case, it is apparent that the implications for teaching are as much philosophical as they are directly applicable to classroom instruction. Without a change in the ideologies which the teacher holds, explicitly and implicitly, the theory of writing which the students will learn will not be substantially altered.

The implications for teaching, therefore, are described in terms of possible changes which the teachers can make if they are to develop the

writing process in their classrooms. The teacher of writing should be aware that:

1. The writing process involves the interaction of writers working together.
2. The teacher's response to children's writing dictates the child's conception of his/her writing and his/her value as a writer and person.
3. Writing is a way for learning.
4. Environments must be established for learning which encourage the writer to enter in with enthusiasm and high expectations for success.
5. It is only through hearing their own voices that children develop control over their language.
6. Teachers need to share their own writing process with their students.
7. Children learn to write by writing.

Possible Implications for Teaching

Teacher educators must consider the values and ideologies of the teachers who are charged with implementing new programmes, and of equal importance, the ideology which underlies the new programme which is to be implemented. Teachers must experience the process themselves.

Instead of being told about writing theory, teachers and prospective teachers must learn to do theory. That is, they must be actively involved in writing workshops which stress the experience of the writing process. Teachers should be able to articulate a theory of writing which will form the foundation for their instructional practice.

Teachers in classrooms must be encouraged to become researchers, investigating the how and why of student's growth as writers. The learning that is done in this process would then form the basis for the curriculum that the teacher develops in her/his class.

Teachers should constantly examine the curriculum which is presented to the children in order to assess what it is demonstrating to the children about learning and, of equal importance, about what the teacher believes about children.

They should learn to teach writing from a writer's perspective. As Frank Smith (1983) argues that reading influences writing skills because readers unconsciously, "read like writers." He goes on to say that"

> **"To read like the writer we engage with the author in what the author is writing. We anticipate what the author will say, so that the author is in effect writing on our behalf, not showing how something is done but doing it with us ... . Bit by bit, one thing at a time, but enormous numbers of things over the passage of time, the learner learns through reading like a writer to write like a writer." (pp. 553-564)**

I believe that Anthony Petrosky (1982) best summarizes the relationships among reading, writing, and literacy that must have led to his notion that the next step in examining these relationships must deal with their convergence when he writes:

> **"One of the most interesting results of connecting reading, literary, and composition theory and pedagogy is that they yield similar explanations of human understanding as a process rooted in the individual's knowledge and feelings and characterized by the fundamental act of making meaning, whether it be through reading, responding, or writing. When we read, we comprehend by putting together impressions of the text with our personal, cultural, and contextual models of reality. When we write, we compose by making meaning from available information, our personal knowledge, and the cultural and contextual frames we happen to find ourselves in. Our theoretical understandings of these processes are converging ... around the central role of human understanding be it of texts of the world ... as a process of composing." (p. 16)**

Further research will obviously be necessary to check and substantiate these implications.

And so I conclude that teachers must "Stay green and grow, not ripen and rot." All parties with a vested interest in education must work together to see that this is so.

Possible Implications for Further Research

Our goal, as teachers of writing, has to be, first and foremost, to learn about writing. What our students tell us in writing must form the basis for our teaching of them. The writing which the children produce reveals the challenge that is open to us when we allow children to write. How we respond to them depends entirely on our theoretical orientations, on what we believe about children and their learning. The purpose of this study was to describe one programme of teaching writing which a teacher implemented in her classroom in looking at the teacher beliefs underlying one literature-based language learning programme. Each of the six themes that emerged as representative of the teacher's philosophy and practices could be considered as a possible topic for further research. The most exciting part of this discovery process is that it never ends.

This study will hopefully encourage other teacher-researchers to examine the Blended Structure and Style Programme developed by Dr. J. B. Webster and the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning developed by Mrs. A. G. Ingham for as stated at the beginning of this study very little formal research is available.

Chapter VIII

The Final Word

The study focus was on two aspects: Firstly; following one Grade Four teacher who was implementing the Blended Structure and Style programme developed by Dr. J. B. Webster. Secondly, describing the BSS programme and implementation which the teacher encountered through attempting to identify the beliefs and philosophy underlying the teachers' implementation of the BSS programme. Through classroom observations and unstructured interviews with the teacher, data was collected and then analyzed. Six themes emerged and were reported on in the study as: (l) The Teacher's Philosophy; (2) Incentives; (3) Demonstrating Student Learning and Development; (4) Ownership; (5) Process/Product or Both; and (6) Reading and Writing.

In the course of the study it became clear that this programme was not only literature-based, it was also student-centered, process-oriented, and an integrated approach to the language learning. For the teacher involved in this study, the incorporation of literature into her language learning programme was not as integral to its base as was her own philosophy and beliefs about learning and teaching.

The diversity of the teacher's beliefs that appeared to be integral to her programme is significant in that it illustrates the complexity of this literature-based programme and its implementation. For those teachers attempting to incorporate literature into their language learning programme, it may be significant to recognize the complexity and depth of one teacher's philosophical basis and the extent to which that teacher's philosophy and beliefs impacted her language learning programme.

The results of this research seem remarkably evocative, judicious, and useful. Assuming the value of this process to teaching writing, the research has attempted to set down the ins and outs, the twists and turns of this approach so as to understand better what it entails, what can go wrong, and what makes it work. This study raises further questions about what a process approach to writing actually is, whether it always succeeds, and whether teachers are attracted to it for personal reasons they will have to come to grips with. Does good teaching depend more on the person than the process? Is the self-scruitinizing that teachers may regard as essential for their growth always appropriate for learning to write, especially for elementary children learning to write? While the study only involved one teacher, it is the belief of this researcher that this study should assist teachers enormously to make the most of the current movement to honour writing and teach it realistically. As a teacher you can help children get ideas. One idea talked over by twenty children will result in twenty different creations, because each child is different, with different feelings, different experiences. The way a child will use his imagination to flesh out an idea, a story skeleton, will make it his/her story, the only one that child could write. I believe that you can not teach anyone to write, but there are basic techniques and strategies that children can be exposed to and learn. These are the same techniques that we teach to adults or anyone who wants to improve their story telling. The secret in learning technique is to write a great deal. If you are playing a tennis match and think about how you hold your racquet, how you will hit the ball on every shot, you probably will not play well. The professional practices part of a game before a match; during the match he/she plays intuitively. Writers also use technique intuitively after much practice.

Scardmalia and Bereiter (1982) report in Research On Written Composition that:

> **A search through recent journals would indicate that methods of writing instruction receiving the most attention include conferencing (Graves, 1978), free-writing (Elbow, 1973), rhetoric of invention (Young, (1976), and sentence combining (Mellon, 1969). (p.795)**

While this study has put more emphasis on ways of trying to influence the composing process through extracting themes from the observations of the data gathered in watching a teacher implement the Blended Structure and Style Method developed by Dr. J. B. Webster, six themes emerged: Strategy instruction (the most direct approach) which this researcher has called Teacher Philosophy and Beliefs; Procedural facilitation (general ways of helping students adopt more sophisticated composing strategies by proving external supports or structures) which this researcher has called Incentives; Product-oriented instruction (instruction that attempts to promote strategy development by providing students with clearer knowledge of goals to strive for during the process of writing) which this researcher has called Process/Product or Both; Ownership (general ways in which the teacher takes 'ownership' of a method for instruction); Reading and Writing (which looks at the question of "Which came first the chicken or the egg?"). Three areas which were discussed by the researcher and the teacher were (1) the area of Inquiry learning (learning through guided experimentation and exploration) but it was felt that this area fell into the Teacher Philosophy, Belief System and so was not treated as a theme on its own. (2) The area of Evaluation was considered as well but both teacher and researcher felt that this was one area which needed a lot more research and investigation and would not be persued in this study. (3) Finally writing across the curriculum while

considered vital was not in fact the focus of this study but would make a wonderful topic for further research.

We (the researcher and the teacher) conclude, using Calkin's (1980) term of "a culture of writing", that creating a social climate supportive of written expression must be established which will greatly facilitate learning to write. While we believe that this study will add to other evidence in the field of writing, we feel that the reader should consider implementing the Blended Structure and Style as one instructional solution to teaching writing and composition.

The researchers wish to thank Mrs. A. G. Ingham for developing the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning and Dr. Webster for giving us the Blended Structure and Style Programme. Finally, thank you Pat for allowing this journey to begin in Teaching Writing and Composition: From the Larger Framework to Its Component Parts. Write on!

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Appendix A
The Cat and the Mouse

The Cat and the Mouse In Partnership

A cat having made acquaintance with a mouse, professed such great love and friendship for her, that the mouse at last agreed that they should live and keep house together.

"We must make provision for the winter," said the cat, "or we shall suffer hunger, and you little mouse, must not stir out, or you will be caught in a trap."

So they took counsel together and bought a little pot of fat. And then they could not tell where to put it for safety, but after long consideration the cat said there could not be a better place than the church, for nobody would steal there; and they would put it under the altar and not touch it until they were really in want. So this done, and the little pot placed in safety.

But before long the cat was seized with a great wish to taste it.

"Listen to me, little mouse," said he;. "I have been asked by my cousin to stand god-father to a little son she has brought into the world; he is white with brown spots; and they want to have the christening to-day, so let me go to it, and you stay at home and keep house."

"Oh yes, certainly," answered the mouse, "pray go by all means; and when you are feasting on all the good things, think of me; I should so like a drop of the sweet red wine."

But was not a word of truth in all this; the cat had no cousin, and had not been asked to stand god-father: he went to the church, straight up to the little pot, and licked the fat off the top; then he took a walk over the roofs of the town, saw his acquaintances, stretched himself in the sun, and licked his whiskers as often as he thought of the little pot of fat; and then when it was evening he went home.

"Here you are at last," said the mouse; "I expect you have had a merry time."

"Oh, pretty well," answered the cat.

"And what name did you give the child?" asked the mouse.

"Top-off," answered the cat, drily.

"Top-off!" cried the mouse. "That is a singular and wonderful name! Is it common in your family?"

"What does it matter?" said the cat. "It's not any worse than Crumb-picker, like your god-child."

A little time after this the cat was again seized with a longing;.

"Again, I must ask you," said he to the mouse, "to do me a favour, and keep house alone for a day. I have been asked a second time to stand god-father; and as the little one has a white ring round its neck, I cannot well refuse."

So the kind little mouse consented, and the cat crept along by the town wall until he reached the church, and going straight to the little pot of fat, devoured half of it.

"Nothing tastes so well as what one keeps to oneself," said he, feeling quite content with his day's work. When he reached home, the mouse asked what name had been given to the child.

"Half-gone," answered the cat.

"Half-gone!" cried the mouse. "I never heard such a name in my life! I'll bet it's not to be found in the calendar."

Soon after that the cat's mouth began to water again for the fat.

"Good things always come in threes," said he to the mouse.

"Again I have been asked to stand god-father, the little one is quite black with white feet, and not any white hair on its body; such a thing does not happen every day, so you will let me go, won't you?"

"Top-off, Half-gone," murmured the mouse, "they are such curious names, I cannot but wonder at them!"

"That's because you are always sitting at home," said the cat, "in your little grey frock and hairy tail, never seeing the world, and fancying all sorts of things."

So the little mouse cleaned up the house and set it all in order. Meanwhile the greedy cat went and made an end of the little pot of fat.

"Now all is finished one's mind will be easy," said he, and came home in the evening, quite sleek and comfortable. The mouse asked at once what name had been given to the third child.

"It won't please you any better than the others," answered the cat. "It is called All-gone."

"All-gone!" cried the mouse. "What an unheard-of name! I never met with anything like it! All-gone! Whatever can it mean?" And shaking her head, she curled herself round and went to sleep. After that the cat was not again asked to stand god-father.

When the winter had come and there was nothing more to be had out of doors, the mouse began to think of their store.

"Come, cat," said she, "we will fetch our pot of fat, how good it will taste, to be sure!"

"Of course it will," said the cat. "Just as good as if you stuck your tongue out of window!"

So they set out, and when they reached the place, they found the pot, but it was standing empty.

"Oh, now I know what it all meant," cried the mouse. "Now I see what sort of a partner you have been! Instead of standing god-father you have devoured it all up; first Top-off, then Half-gone, then---"

"Will you hold your tongue!" screamed the cat. "Another word, and I devour you too!"

And the poor little mouse, having "All-gone" on her tongue, out it came, and the cat leaped upon her and made an end of her. And that is the way of the world.

Appendix B
Five Structures

Narrative Story Structure (Ingham Chart)

Title
by
Name

I. Who - is in the story?
Where - do the live, go?

II. What happens
abbreviated
Story Sequence

III. Problem or Surprise

Solution

Closing Clincher: Repeats/reflects title.

Stories from Pictures Structure (Chick Chart)

Title
by
Name

(Picture One)

I. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats topic

(Picture Two)

II. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats topic

(Picture Three)

III. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
*Clincher: Repeats topic and Title

Descriptive Story Structure (Dog Chart)

Title
by
Name

Introduction:
Time, place, 3 themes
*Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Title

(LOOKS) I. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Topic

(FOOD) II. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Topic

(TRICKS) III. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Topic

Conclusion:
Repeat 3 themes
Most important and why?
*Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Title

Expositive Structure (Report/Essay Chart)

Champlain
by
Name

Introduction:
Time, place, 3 themes

*Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Title

(Picture/Map/Illustration)

(Explorer) I. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Topic

(Picture/Map/Illustration)

(Founded) II. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Topic

(Picture/Map/Illustration)

(Soldier) III. Topic
1.
2. Key Words
3.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Topic

Conclusion:
Repeats 3 themes
Most Important and Why?
*Clincher: Repeats/Reflects Title

References

Critique Structure (Opinion Chart)

Title
by
Name

Introduction:
Type of story "story title", Book Title
Author, publisher, date, pages,
illustrations: number and quality
*Clincher: Repeat Title

I. Characters - Setting
People or animals participating in the story.
Place, time and mood of the story.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects the Topic

II. Conflict - Plot
Problems which must be solved.
The plan of the story.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects the Topic

III. Climax - Theme
Turning point of the story.
Message about life the author is trying to reveal.
Clincher: Repeats/Reflects the Topic

Conclusions:
liked and tell why?
disliked and tell why?
*Clincher: Repeats the Title

Appendix C
Author Vita

Vita

In much of the literature dealing with the problems and hazards of research methods, the researcher is encouraged to be constantly aware of his/her preconceived ideas about the chosen situation and, more particularly, his/her personal biases, values, attitudes, and so forth. It could be argued that such warning must be especially heeded by a former principal/teacher choosing to conduct a research project in a school. With such considerations in mind, it would seem that not only should the reader of this study be made aware of the results of the study itself, but also, an awareness of the background of the researcher should play an integral part in the presentation. Presenting such material does pose somewhat of a problem. It would seem unlikely that the reader would welcome a long, detailed description of the life of the researcher. However, some background data would help the reader understand the researcher's personal biases and attitudes, for example. What seems to be needed here is not so much information that might appear irrelevant to the reader, but data that would give the reader a picture of the persona of the researcher. Pelto (1970, 42 & 220) in discussing the hazards and punishments of field work, addresses just this issue:

> **"Even in unusually benign instances the field researcher must be very sensitive in his presentation of self and management of social interactions."**

If the reader is to trust and believe the findings of this study, it would seem important that the "self" of the researcher must, in some way, be presented to the reader. Further to this presentation of self, the researcher's perspective, his reality would seem a necessary component of this vita. Two different strategies are contained here. A brief summary of the researcher's actual teaching experiences is provided. Secondly, an analysis based on the work of Esland (Young, 1971, 43) is used to present the reader with insights into the pedagogical, subject and career perspectives of the researcher in examining Structure: From the Larger Framework to the Component Parts.

Introduction

Thirty three years ago I stepped into my first classroom. I faced forty-five eager students awaiting instruction. Thereafter, I taught an equal number of years in the primary (Division One), elementary (Division Two) systems. During the last twenty years my main job has been in administration as a school principal while continuing to teach remedial reading/writing classes and English Second Language classes. Almost from the first year of teaching, I realized that the skills of writing had been woefully neglected. After a couple of years of muddling towards a practical system, I visited Mrs. Ingham and read the stories which

her grade one students were producing. Even the poorest of her stories were better than my grade five's were writing. For an example of the work of Mrs. Ingham's students see The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning (1972). Staying with her in her home in Yorkton, Saskatchewan and listening carefully to her explanations, I returned with determination to produce with grade five, something to at least equal Mrs. Ingham's grade one. The result over the next decade was her foundation in classroom management and teaching method which spurred me on to use her methods. Working with teachers in summer classes in her methods have been so rewarding and successful for myself and the classes for which I was responsible. Then in the summer of 1978, I met Dr. J. B. Webster, the author of Blended Structure and Style in Writing (1978). Every summer since then, the writer has had the privilege of working as an assistant to, and under the tutelage of Mrs. A. G. Ingham and Dr. J. B. Webster in seminars with practising teachers. These seminars have been in the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning. They have added new insights. They have promoted new perspectives. The method of writing instruction described in this study is universal from beginning students in grade one to students in grade twelve and indeed students at the university level.

It seems to be claimed annually at the beginning of the university year that students do not know how to write. One can only imagine the illiteracy of those who are unable to enter college. Almost every Canadian university has organized compulsory courses to teach written communication skills. Good teaching procedures are universal. They apply at multi-levels. Variations occur in pacing. Variations occur in reading levels. Students should enter university writing as well as they read. Teacher must use materials at the appropriate level of instruction for their students and use methods of teaching writing techniques which are appropriate for their students. Variations will occur in pacing because of the wide level of abilities found within each classroom.

Many of the public claim that our schools are filled with meaningless language exercises such as workbooks and assignments which fill in the blanks, one word answers, multiple choice, underline or circle the correct answer. And many administrators claim that the photo-copy machine has replaced the workbooks. No wonder, it appears, high school students can hardly write a correct sentence. Little wonder that so many students at university dread the essay assignment and go searching for classes which require the least writing. Consequently, some university courses have succumbed to multiple choice. Lecturers wring their hands and call for a return to the intensive teaching of grammar. Helpful as grammar may be, it does not, by itself, teach one to write a sentence, a paragraph or a short essay. Teachers are advised to rid their classes of meaningless exercises which have plagued language arts. Rather, we should spend the time in teaching practical strategies of writing various styles of compositions such that a future generation of university entrants will know how to take notes

and organize, outline and write an essay, a narrative or descriptive short story and a critique. Writing is a process and the process needs to be guided and blended.

Teach language strategies as the need arises, that is when you see deficiencies in students' compositions. Phonetic rules, phrasing, punctuation and contextual surmise are taught so than an individual can read. The emphasis is upon the process for arriving at the end product. Writing is begun immediately and the strategies taught as the need arises. In language, the past tendency was to teach verb tenses, for example, divorced from the actual process of writing. A student may be able to parse a sentence, yet be unable to write one. Language skills must be taught as the need for them is demonstrated. Regardless of how often a student correctly identifies a noun clause and its relationship in the sentence, until he uses it in how own essay, creative story or book report, the teacher cannot be confident that (s)he has internalized this new knowledge and made it functional. Very quickly, a teacher will discover that there are problems with verb tenses using "had". That is the time and place to teach their use. Thereafter, insist upon them being used in compositions. As in reading, so in language, teach the strategies when the need for it arises.

This method of learning teaches eight different styles of writing. There is a cumulative development as you move through the units. If the teacher decides to skip one unit, certain strategies will be lost which hamper success in the next unit. Whether one teaches primary, elementary, secondary or university one should begin at unit one and proceed through to unit ten. The only difference between teaching primary or secondary is that the level of reading material will change. Furthermore, instructional materials employed should usually be one or two levels below the grade level of the class at the time of presenting concepts. Reading should be easy, in order to allow the students to concentrate upon writing strategies. All marking comments are directed toward the specific writing strategies which have been taught. As in any other endeavor, writing requires practice. Once this programme is begun, it would be pursued every school day without fail. I believe that writing has declined in quality because it has declined in quantity. Following unit one on note taking and another on summarizing, there are two streams in the syllabus; one moving towards the goal of essay writing, the other to creative writing. By completion of the course, a student has at his/her command, eight distinct styles of writing or models from which to choose when deciding upon the approach to any specific writing problem or assignment.

Within the syllabus, the author recommends that grade one can achieve to the end of unit three. Unit three employs the Ingham (1972) narrative story sequence chart as described in her text, The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning. Grade two should be able to begin with unit one in September and complete unit five by June. Grade three should complete from unit one to seven and grade four, from units one to ten. A grade six or a grade eight teacher should also

begin with unit one and complete all the units. It must be stressed that teachers of all grades begin with unit one and move through the entire syllabus in sequence since there is an accumulative building of the strategies. In the high school, units one to five might be completed in two weeks for each. The high school teacher wishes to get to research reports, creative writing and essays as quickly as possible. The teacher will need to spend at least one month on each of these units. Dr. Webster and Dr. Flint, who are presently teaching this method in their history classes at Dalhousie University, rush in order to cover the syllabus in their university classes. This syllabus goes against current assumptions and suggests the radical idea that one follows the same programme whether one is teaching grade four or first year university. As in reading, writing has a basic unity which stretches from pre-school to first year university. A grade three paragraph must possess a topic sentence in the same way as in a grade twelve essay. A grade one story about a cat must have a good ending - a final clincher - just like a university essay analyzing the Cold War.

In classes, where one teacher is responsible for content subjects as well as language, once unit four on summarizing a reference has been taught and partially mastered in the English period, further practice of a continuous nature can be achieved by transferring the strategy processes to one of the content subjects. The syllabus suggests transferral to science. In the language period, the teacher is assigning topics for students to find a library reference, summarize, make notes and write it up. By the completion of unit eight, students are summarizing references in the science period, doing research projects in health and essays in Social Studies. In the English period they are beginning the unit on critiques. In theory, the class is practising four different writing styles each week. In high school, where there is a separate teacher for each subject, this intensity of concentration might be possible with careful co-ordination. It would not be easy in most situations. The work of Dr. Webster's most successful application of the transfer system was in a school where he was responsible for the English and social studies curricula for the junior high grades. This doubled the writing practice of the students. Transferring provides practice. Transferring demonstrates relevance. Within this method of teaching, the multi-subject teacher secures marked advantages over the specialist in a single discipline.

This method of learning stresses modelling. Besides the Ingham model in unit three, others are introduced during subsequent units. It is the firm conviction of this writer that students must master the model. Creativity should be within the boundaries of the model. There is a great deal talked today about creativity. This researcher believes that structure is taught and imagination is triggered. Just as a child is not being creative when he/she misspells a word or writes in sentence fragments, so he/she is not being creative if he/she fails to include all of the elements which make up a good paragraph. Too often creativity is confused with bad

writing. To some this method, at times, may appear mechanical. But a good writer, like a good army officer, must learn to obey the rules before he/she can be trusted to make them. Within the boundaries of the model, there is ample room for creativity. Creativity relates to what one writes, the model to how one writes.

This method is not a philosophy of written communication. It is a practical "how to" method of teaching writing which has been developed in the classroom. It has inspired confidence and enthusiasm in the majority of students who have applied it. It generates excitement such that the majority of students will write on topics of their own choosing, above and beyond that assigned in class.

From 1960 to 1970, the first ten years of my teaching experience might be considered to have been rather traditional and, therefore, immediately recognizable to most elementary school teachers. Despite the fact that those years were spent in three different schools, the expectations of the job were very much alike. The school buildings were similar in design and in the ways in which they were used. Classrooms were essentially closed and private. They were similar in their design and in the equipment they contained. The curricula in the schools were surprisingly similar. Pupil- teacher ratios were 35 to 50.

In 1971, I was appointed as assistant principal to an inner-city school in Edmonton. It was here that I received the most exciting educational experiences of my career to that particular time. I learned how to team-teach, work in a large open area, and be responsible for curriculum development, in large areas of the school subjects. Two master educators befriended me, the principal, Mr. N. A. M. Knowles, and a teacher, Mrs. A. Kowalchuk, who have become very personal friends. At the time those of us who stayed and worked in the school overtime, were unaware of the unusual experiences we were being given. However, in retrospect, the opportunities were not only rare for their time (1971-'74), but would be considered unique even now. My responsibilities included the language arts programme, the library and other administrative aspects assigned, plus teaching a grade three class. Joyfully it was here that I was introduced to Mrs. A. G. Ingham when her daughter Mrs. Shirley George accepted a long term teaching assignment at our school. This changed my teaching life.

In 1974, I was appointed principal of another school, and it was here that I began implementing many of the ideas which I hold today as paramount to successful teaching and care-giving. Mrs. George came with me to this school and along with Miss Jan Newman and Mrs. Cynthia Ward we changed a school faculty.

In 1979, I was asked to open a brand new, yet-to-be-constructed, school. This presented me with the opportunity of even having a hand in the design-construction of the building and in gathering together a team of teachers to work with the children in this new community.

In 1983, I asked to return to the classroom and returned to the first school in which I began my teaching career to teach a split grade five-six group of children. I was wanting to get back into the classroom to work with the new curricula that was being used and again teach and work with children on a full-time basis.

In 1984, I was again asked to open a new school and so, taking with me what I had previously learned, I took on this wonderful, exciting challenge. Each year of my teaching experience has been exciting and rewarding, but I believe that for the last seven years I have been in heaven.

Now, after thirty years, I have entered into the field of researcher. The 'self' being presented was not a neophyte to the business of teaching, but certainly a neophyte in the role of educational researcher. I was new to the task, but hopefully, not unprepared for or unaware of the pitfalls and difficulties to be encountered. My role was to be that of observer and listener, and not that of critic. To the extent that I am an agent of change, it is only to that aspect of teaching written composition from the larger framework to the component parts which this researcher believes that classroom teachers are seeking to find.

Esland (1971), in attempting to represent the constitutive categories of thought through which a teacher understand his/her occupational world, has devised questions which attempt to uncover the assumptions about learning, about the child, about teaching style, which form the teacher's pedagogical perspective. In attempting to uncover the teacher's subject perspective, Esland suggests the search for the underlying paradigms, problems, criteria and assumptions which form the basis of this perspective. The teacher's career perspective is represented by the uncovering of assumptions about career location and relations with significant epistemic communities. It would seem appropriate in this vita, to focus on the perspectives which deal with the pedagogical and subject assumptions of the researcher rather than on the career perspective since career assumptions on the part of the researcher have only peripheral bearing on the study.

Pedagogical Perspective

Esland offers the following questions designed to uncover the individual's assumptions about learning. Each of the six questions in this vita will be applied to the researcher. In response to the first question which asks which psychological theories, explicit or implicit, are dominant, the following answer is given: Although recognition is given by this researcher to the work of Bruner, Piaget and other theorists in the development mode, the basic psychological thrust must be described as humanistic in nature. The work of Rogers, Mazlow, Dreikurs and others form the basic psychological underpinnings of this researcher's perspective on learners. The second question which Esland poses focuses on the assumptions which are held about the qualities of responses from pupils which indicate whether learning has taken place.

If it is considered important to the researcher that the student learn values and strategies as well as factual knowledge then the responses would depend on the particular objectives of a given lesson or series of lessons. In language learning, the personal growth of the student would matter to the researcher as much as the content of the material being presented. The third and fourth questions ask the individual to define "good" and "bad" pupils in terms of favorable and unfavorable outcomes. Favorable outcomes, to this researcher, in language learning classes, occur when all students are able to show some growth in the knowledge, strategies and values components of a programme. Unfavorable outcomes, then, occur when the intents, activities or materials are evaluated as being unsuitable for the personal growth of the students. In essence, then, there are no "good" or "bad" students. The intents may be unreasonable, the materials or writings may be unsuitable, the activities may be over or under in their expectations and the evaluation activities may not be properly geared to the given intents, and so forth. The fifth question addresses the issue of distribution of "good" and "bad" pupils. To the researcher, the distribution alluded to here can be accounted for in different terms. In any classroom, no matter what distribution methods the school has selected to use in order to make up its classes, there are necessarily 20, 25 or 30 different individuals, who have been gathered together for ease of instruction. The important point here is that the researcher, while recognizing the individual "realities" of the 20 or so students, also recognizes the logistical problems of trying to provide individual programmes, in language learning or any other subject, for each and every student. So attempts must be made to provide activities and materials which will, hopefully, permit each student to grow and learn as much as possible. The sixth question deals with intentions as they are displayed in teaching procedures and as they are expressed in favorable outcomes. To this researcher, outcomes are favorable in language learning classes when all students are given the opportunities to develop strategies, gain knowledge and perhaps, learn values appropriate to the given reality of life-world of each student.

The next three questions which Esland offers pertain to the child's intellectual status in the view of the teacher. Esland asks the teacher to reflect upon his/her implicit model of the child's thinking. Is the model psychometric or epistemological? Is the child reified? To this researcher, the model of the child's thinking is epistemological. The child is not an object that can be treated as we might treat a chair or a desk. The child is a human being who comes to school each morning with his/her own reality and deserves to be treated with recognition and respect. It should be pointed out to the reader that this researcher, in the role of school principal for the past twenty years, ordered a number of intelligence tests for students. However, if the paradigm of the administrator of such tests differs from the psychometric model usually associated with intelligence testing, the entire activity of testing a child's intellectual ability takes on a completely different colouration. If the intent is to provide the

tester with the opportunity to get to know a bit about the personality, work habits and general behaviour of the student in a structured, games-like atmosphere, then the situation is quite different. If the results of the tests are used, not to label the student, but as diagnostic tools to help the teacher better identify and handle the child's strengths and weaknesses, then, again, the underlying intent is less psychometric and more epistemological in nature. Finally, if such knowledge about individual students helps teachers (and parents) to make their expectations more realistic, and also helps teachers to better programme for that individual child's need then, again, the intent is different than that usually associated with testing. The second question in this section deals with age and learner and asks the individual teacher to reflect upon the constraints which chronological age is thought to place upon learning. To this researcher, age is only one factor which must be considered in relation to a child's learning. Social and emotional development are also important. Health and physical factors such as hearing and vision are important and must be considered in relation to the child's learning. Family background as to the economic situation, problems at home, and siblings must also be considered. Chronological age is, as was stated earlier, only one factor in the total picture of the child and his/her ability to learn. The final question in this section deals with social class and its relation to thinking. To this researcher, social class is one factor in many to be recognized and dealt with in relation to how a child thinks and learns. It is not, however, a factor which encompasses all the other factors discussed earlier. It is one of many but not the only factor which is important. If the teachers who worked with this researcher as a young child, adolescent and college student had allowed social class to be a major factor governing their behaviour, this thesis would not now be a reality. The third section of the pedagogical perspective deals with the assumptions about teaching style which the individual holds. The first question to this section deals with the question of didactic or problem-solving techniques.

To this teacher, there is a place for both styles in language learning classes. At times, it is best and most expedient to lecture to students. At other times, it is better to offer students an opportunity to attack a problem or to work co-operatively. It depends entirely on what the intents of the teacher are at a given point in time. The second question focuses on the degree of control over communication thought to be necessary. It is important to this researcher that the degree of control of communication be as small as is feasible in a given set of circumstances. The final question in this section focuses on the degree of reification of knowledge which is present in the teacher's reality. To this researcher, knowledge comes in many forms and the ways of getting to know vary situation to situation. This study is in itself a case in point. If the desire of the researcher has been to find out what a teacher felt about the language arts programme, a detailed questionnaire might have been sufficient for that purpose. If, however, different knowledge was desired, as was the case, different approaches or "ways of finding out" were

needed. The multiple realities of three groups (the literature, the teacher, the programme), it was thought, deserved a more intimate approach.

Subjective Perspective

The first question which Esland suggests focuses on the teacher's world view of the subject. To this researcher, language learning is the most important 'subject' in the school. It is the 'subject' which can and perhaps, should encompass and underpin every other subject. It is, after all, the 'subject; which directly relates to everything else the child will do for an entire lifetime. The crucial paradigm at work here is the critical paradigm which permits us to see our world and ourselves in praxis. We think and reflect upon ourselves and our world and base our actions upon that desire for the betterment of all groups involved in that world view. The second question in this section asks the teacher to define which problems are important for the subject. To this researcher, the problems which are important in language learning in Alberta centre upon issues of development, implementation and evaluation. Since the development of the curriculum has already been completed, the problems concerned with that aspect of the question are, in fairness, not yet in a position to be discussed. Problems of implementation are being experienced now and are vital to the programme. Problems of evaluation are already being felt. If the Government of Alberta encourages school systems to prepare or use system-wide tests, then, surely a problem will immediately surface. What data will such tests provide? Will these tests be a true measure of the knowledge which students have acquired in language arts classes? These are only some of the problems which are envisaged by this researcher. The utility dimension of the knowledge in language learning provides the focus for the next question. To this researcher, language learning knowledge is best applied to social or real life experiences. Knowledge for the sake of knowing has its place in language learning. However, the emphasis is best placed upon knowledge for the betterment of people and the world they live in. The process of learning and the cognitive development of children are more important than the acquisition of factual knowledge. The criteria of utility, the focus of the next question, are both extrinsic and intrinsic. If the acquisition of language learning knowledge has economic, humanitarian, or social integration benefits as well as benefits to the individual in that his/her qualities of awareness are heightened, then so much the better. Finally, if as the final question asks, the progression from common sense knowledge to theoretical knowledge can be attained, then not only will researchers be making a useful contribution, but students will, undoubtedly, benefit from the curriculum changes which will hopefully occur.

Although it was earlier stated that career assumptions on the part of the researcher were not appropriate in the discussion, some mention should be made of the parts of this section which are relevant to the reader. It should be recognized both by the researcher and the reader that there is very little public legitimation for the views expressed here. However, there are

enough significant others both in schools and at the University who are prepared to reinforce the reality expressed here.

On Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m., May 26, 1992 the Edmonton Public School superintendent announced that beginning on August 27, 1992 I would be principal at Glengarry Elementary School. To be continued.... .